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General Assembly

Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

66th plenary meeting

Friday, 3 December 2004, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ping .... (Gabon)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Dauth (Australia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 108

Programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/448/Add.1)

The Acting President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Fifth Committee that is before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote. The positions of delegations regarding the recommendation of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members that, under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that when the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should as far as possible explain its vote only once, that is either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from in the Committee.

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited, strictly, to 10 minutes. Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the report of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take a decision in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. The draft resolution is entitled "Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council: United Nations advance team in the Sudan".

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same.

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/58).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 108.

Reports of the First Committee

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the First Committee on agenda items 57 to 72. I request the Rapporteur of the First Committee, Mr. Mohamed Ali Saleh Alnajar of

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Yemen, to introduce the reports of the First Committee in one intervention.

Mr. Alnajar (Yemen), Rapporteur of the First Committee (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a pleasure for me to introduce the reports of the First Committee to the General Assembly. They are contained in documents A/59/451 to A/59/466. In keeping with the request of the General Assembly, the First Committee was able to complete its work within the five weeks allotted to it during this year's session. There were 23 formal meetings, and the work of the Committee was substantive, constructive and action-oriented. Fifty-four draft resolutions and three draft decisions were introduced on disarmament agenda items under consideration by the Committee. Two draft resolutions (A/C.1/59/L.1 and L.13), on improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the First Committee, were withdrawn. Of the 54 draft resolutions and three draft decisions, 34 draft resolutions and two draft decisions — 65 per cent of the total — were adopted without a vote.

As in previous sessions, the Committee gave priority to items relating to weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, and to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Eighteen of the 54 draft resolutions pertain to nuclear issues.

Because of the impact that the threat of terrorism has had on the international scene, the way in which we look at questions of disarmament has changed. Disarmament and related issues were discussed with greater urgency and with an unprecedented degree of cooperation throughout the session. Members considered all matters relating to peace and disarmament and, indeed, discussed disarmament issues relating to weapons of all kinds, from weapons of mass destruction to small arms and light weapons. Delegations welcomed progress in the non-proliferation of both nuclear weapons and conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons.

At the same time, members highlighted the threat posed by existing arsenals of nuclear and conventional weapons. This did not prevent members from reviewing their positions on peace and disarmament issues, but it gave impetus to efforts to take substantive and urgent disarmament measures. That trend was apparent when the Committee considered nuclear disarmament. It was stressed that nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament must be a priority for the future. Here, delegations stressed the need for further bilateral and multilateral nuclear arms-reduction efforts.

Delegations observed that, while we look forward with hope to the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), we must revisit nuclear disarmament in order to develop new methods, approaches and military and strategic theories. Consideration was also given to ways to prevent such arms from falling into the hands of terrorists and other non-State actors. It was observed that further steps are needed leading to total nuclear disarmament, and a number of draft resolutions may be seen in that context. These include texts relating to nuclear-weapon-free zones in Central Asia and in the Middle East, to consolidating the regime established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco and to establishing a nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere. All of this was seen as a step towards a nuclear-weapon-free world. Members urged implementation of conventions on nuclear waste.

Many delegations expressed despair at the failure of the Conference on Disarmament to discuss key substantive issues during its 2004 session. There was a need for further negotiations during the session to reach viable arrangements and to draft instruments on these issues. Members also affirmed that all issues regarding this year's deadlock will be reviewed so that the Conference can establish an ad hoc committee to begin negotiations on weapons of mass destruction.

There was support for initiatives on the implementation of the Convention on Chemical Weapons. Delegations also welcomed the annual Meetings of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention leading up to the sixth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty, at which, inter alia, issues of verification will be discussed.

Although regional disarmament retains its conventional focus, the issue has taken on a new dimension that requires firm and urgent action. I refer here to the question of small arms and light weapons. The draft resolution on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (draft resolution XXI in document A/59/459) received broad support; it emphasizes the importance of the full implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects adopted by the United Nations Conference on that subject.

Allow me, before concluding my comments on substantive issues, to briefly mention the question of improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the First Committee. As I have noted, the First Committee considered and adopted by consensus a draft resolution (draft resolution XXX of document A/59/459) sponsored by 106 States on that item. Major challenges to the international community demand a new, more dynamic approach. In addition, it has become clear that international threats cannot be countered without a unified effort by all States. Such efforts could be promoted by the biennialization or triennialization of certain items and by clustering similar draft resolutions. The Committee also decided to reduce the number of its draft resolutions and emphasized the need for a new approach.

I would like to make a correction to draft resolution IV in document A/59/459. The penultimate preambular paragraph should begin with the words "Being concerned".

Before concluding, I would like to commend delegations for their cooperation, their active contribution to the work of the Committee and their efforts to build a more peaceful and stable world. I would like especially to thank Ambassador Alfonso De Alba, Chairman of the First Committee, who guided its work with great insight, diplomatic skill and ability, based on his expertise in issues of disarmament and international peace and security. On behalf of the Committee and on my own account, I would like also to thank the Vice-Chairs for their very effective and efficient cooperation in the work of the Committee and especially in the various working groups that met during formal and informal consultations.

I would further like to thank Mr. Nobuyasu Abe, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, and Mr. Chen Jian, Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management, who provided invaluable and effective assistance to the First Committee. I would like especially to thank the Secretary of the First Committee, Ms. Cheryl Stoute, who shared her expertise and abilities with us, enabling the work of the Committee to be crowned with success. This also enabled consensus to prevail in the First Committee, something that is becoming ever rarer. My thanks go also to Mr. Sergei Cherniavsky, Mr. Tam Chung and all the other members of the Secretariat who provided their valuable support to the Committee.

With those introductory comments, I commend the draft resolutions and draft decisions recommended in documents A/59/451 to A/59/466 for adoption by the General Assembly.

The Acting President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the First Committee which are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote. Positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the First Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that when the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, that is either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee.

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with decision 34/401, explanations of vote are strictly limited to 10 minutes, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the First Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the First Committee, unless notified otherwise in advance. This means that where recorded or separate votes were taken, we will do the same. I should also hope that we may proceed to adopt without a vote those recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the First Committee.

Agenda item 57

Reduction of military budgets

Report of the First Committee (A/59/451)

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the First Committee contained in document A/59/451?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 57?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 58

Maintenance of international security — good-neighbourliness, stability and development in South-Eastern Europe

Report of the First Committee (A/59/452)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution.

The First Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/59).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 58?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 59

Verification in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in the field of verification

Report of the First Committee (A/59/453)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution.

The First Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/60).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 59?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 60

Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

Report of the First Committee (A/59/454)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution.

The First Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/61).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 60?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 61

Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament

Report of the First Committee (A/59/455)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Chile, Haiti, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Paraguay, Russian Federation, Samoa, South Africa, Tajikistan, Tonga, Ukraine, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu.

The draft resolution was adopted by 106 votes to 48, with 21 abstentions (resolution 59/62).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Georgia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote against.]

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 61?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 62

Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East

Report of the First Committee (A/59/456)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution.

The First Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/63).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 62?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 63

Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons

Report of the First Committee (A/59/457)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Tuvalu, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Vanuatu.

The draft resolution was adopted by 118 votes to none, with 63 abstentions (resolution 59/64).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Georgia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 63?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 64

Prevention of an arms race in outer space

Report of the First Committee (A/59/458)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

Haiti, Israel, Palau, United States of America.

The draft resolution was adopted by 178 votes to none, with 4 abstentions (resolution 59/65).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Georgia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 64?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 65

General and complete disarmament

Report of the First Committee (A/59/459)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it 30 draft resolutions recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 90 of its report and three draft decisions recommended by the Committee in paragraph 91 of the same report.

I give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, who wishes to make statement in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mr. Kim Chang Guk (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I should like to speak in explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.50, entitled "The Hague Code of Conduct against ballistic missile proliferation".

My delegation understands that the missile proliferation issue is being used to obstruct the development and the positioning of missiles by certain developing countries, particularly those countries that the United States and its allies detest. Those that have most of the missiles in the world are none other than the United States and its allies. They are developing new types of missiles, deploying them abroad and selling them to other countries.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in dealing with the missile issue, always refers to the political and military situation that has been created on the Korean peninsula. The United States and its allies in the region have deployed numerous nuclear missiles around the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, blockading it militarily and threatening a pre-emptive strike against it. In these circumstances, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has no interest in any debate which may negatively affect the development, production and deployment of missiles for its self-defence.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is concerned at the use, under the pretext of non-proliferation, of double standards with respect to the efforts of the developing countries to strengthen their self-defence forces and to develop space technology. However, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, out of respect for the idea of the draft resolution, will not participate in the voting.

The Acting President: I give the floor to the representative of the Philippines on a point of order.

Mr. Gatan (Philippines): I wish to speak on a point of order because, although the Philippine delegation co-sponsored draft resolution A/59/L.50, the Philippines is not included in the list of sponsors. Apparently there has been an inadvertent omission. We would like to rectify this situation by formally announcing and requesting that it be place on record that the Philippines is co-sponsoring draft resolution A/59/L.50.

The Acting President: That will be attended to.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the 30 draft resolutions and the three draft decisions, one by one.

After all the decisions have been taken, representatives will again have the opportunity to explain their vote.

Will delegations please turn to paragraph 90 of section III concerning the draft resolutions.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "National legislation on transfer of arms, military equipment and dual-use goods and technology".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution I without a vote. May I take that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 59/66).

The Acting President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Missiles".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Israel, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Tuvalu, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Uzbekistan.

Draft resolution II was adopted by 119 votes to 4, with 60 abstentions (resolution 59/67).

[Subsequently, the delegation of New Zealand informed the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

The Acting President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia,

Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

***Against*:**

Palau, United States of America.

***Abstaining*:**

France, Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

***Draft resolution III was adopted by 175 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions* (resolution 59/68).**

[Subsequently, the delegations of Canada and the Czech Republic informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President: Draft resolution IV is entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

***In favour*:**

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

***Against*:**

Albania, Israel, Latvia, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, Poland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

***Abstaining*:**

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand,

Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

Draft resolution IV was adopted by 125 votes to 9, with 49 abstentions (resolution 59/69).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Greece informed the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

The Acting President: Draft resolution V is entitled "Measures to uphold the authority of the 1925 Geneva Protocol".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America.

Draft resolution V was adopted by 179 votes to none, with 5 abstentions (resolution 59/70).

The Acting President: Draft resolution VI is entitled "Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution VI without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution VI was adopted (resolution 59/71).

The Acting President: Draft resolution VII is entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution VII without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution VII was adopted (resolution 59/72).

The Acting President: Draft resolution VIII is entitled "Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution VIII without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution VIII was adopted (resolution 59/73).

The Acting President: Draft resolution IX is entitled "Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution IX without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution IX was adopted (resolution 59/74).

The Acting President: Draft resolution X is entitled "Accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments".

A separate vote has been requested on operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution X. If there is no objection to that request, I shall first put to the vote operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution X.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

India, Israel, Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Mauritius, Pakistan, Russian Federation.

Operative paragraph 2 was retained by 169 votes to 4, with 4 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of the Russian Federation informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President: I shall now put to the vote draft resolution X as a whole.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

France, Israel, Latvia, Palau, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Albania, Australia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Uzbekistan.

Draft resolution X as a whole was adopted by 151 votes to 6, with 24 abstentions (resolution 59/75).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XI is entitled "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

India, Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Brazil, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Malta, Mexico, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Sweden.

Draft resolution XI was adopted by votes 165 to 3, with 16 abstentions (resolution 59/76).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XII is entitled "Nuclear disarmament".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Haiti, India, Ireland, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malta, Mauritius, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Sweden, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

Draft resolution XII was adopted by 117 votes to 43, with 21 abstentions (resolution 59/77).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Georgia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote against.]

The Acting President: Draft resolution XIII is entitled "Relationship between disarmament and development".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

France, Israel.

Draft resolution XIII was adopted by 180 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions (resolution 59/78).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XIV is entitled "Reducing nuclear danger".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Ecuador, Georgia, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Paraguay, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

Draft resolution XIV was adopted by 116 votes to 46, with 18 abstentions (resolution 59/79).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Georgia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote against.]

The Acting President: Draft resolution XV is entitled "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution XV without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution XV was adopted (resolution 59/80).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XVI is entitled "The Conference on Disarmament decision (CD/1547) of 11 August 1998 to establish, under item 1 of its agenda entitled 'Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament', an ad hoc committee to negotiate, on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein, a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Draft resolution XVI was adopted by 179 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions (resolution 59/81).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XVII is entitled "Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution XVII without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution XVII was adopted (resolution 59/82).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XVIII is entitled "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the

International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*".

A separate vote has been requested on operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution XVIII.

In the absence of objection, I shall first put to the vote operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution XVIII.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Israel, Palau, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Belarus, France, Latvia, Uzbekistan.

Operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution XVIII was retained by 170 votes to 5, with 4 abstentions.

The Acting President: I shall now put to the vote draft resolution XVIII as a whole.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein, Micronesia (Federated States of), Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Montenegro, Switzerland, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Uzbekistan.

Draft resolution XVIII as a whole was adopted by 132 votes to 29, with 24 abstentions (resolution 59/83).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XIX is entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

Azerbaijan, China, Cuba, Egypt, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Myanmar, Pakistan, Palau, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam.

Draft resolution XIX was adopted by 157 votes to none, with 22 abstentions (resolution 59/84).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XX is entitled "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas".

Separate votes have been requested on the three last words — "and South Asia" — of operative paragraph 5 and on operative paragraph 5 as a whole of draft resolution XX.

In the absence of objection, I shall first put to the vote the last three words — "and South Asia" — of operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution XX, on which a separate vote has been requested.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia.

Against:

India, Pakistan, Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Bhutan, France, Israel, Myanmar, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The last three words of operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution XX — "and South Asia" — were retained by 158 votes to 4, with 7 abstentions.

The Acting President: In the absence of objection, I shall now put to the vote operative paragraph 5 as a whole of draft resolution XX, on which a separate vote has been requested.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

India, Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Bhutan, France, Israel, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Operative paragraph 5 as a whole of draft resolution XX was retained by 166 votes to 3, with 7 abstentions.

The Acting President: I shall now put to the vote draft resolution XX as a whole.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

France, Palau, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Bhutan, India, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Pakistan, Russian Federation, Spain.

Draft resolution XX as a whole was adopted by 171 votes to 4, with 8 abstentions (resolution 59/85).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XXI is entitled "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution XXI without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution XXI was adopted (resolution 59/86).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XXII is entitled "Confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution XXII without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution XXII was adopted (resolution 59/87).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XXIII is entitled "Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

India.

Abstaining:

Bhutan

Draft resolution XXIII was adopted by 178 votes to 1, with 1 abstention (resolution 59/88).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XXIV is entitled "Regional disarmament".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution XXIV without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution XXIV was adopted (resolution 59/89).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XXV is entitled "Prevention of the illicit transfer and unauthorized access to and use of man-portable air defence systems".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution XXV without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution XXV was adopted (resolution 59/90).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XXVI is entitled "The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of).

Abstaining:

Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cuba, Djibouti, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Pakistan, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

Draft resolution XXVI was adopted by 161 votes to 2, with 15 abstentions (resolution 59/91).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Djibouti informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President: Draft resolution XXVII is entitled "Information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution XXVII without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution XXVII was adopted (resolution 59/92).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XXVIII is entitled "United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution XXVIII without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution XXVIII was adopted (resolution 59/93).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XXIX is entitled "Bilateral strategic nuclear arms reductions and the new strategic framework".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution XXIX without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution XXIX was adopted (resolution 59/94).

The Acting President: Draft resolution XXX is entitled "Improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the First Committee".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution XXX without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution XXX was adopted (resolution 59/95).

The Acting President: The Assembly will now turn to paragraph 91 of document A/59/459, which deals with draft decisions.

Draft decision I is entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia".

The First Committee adopted draft decision I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The Acting President: Draft decision II is entitled "United Nations conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers in the context of disarmament".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

France, Palau, Poland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovin[illegible] Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey.

Draft decision II was adopted by 138 votes to 5, with 38 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Israel informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote against; the delegations of the Czech Republic and the Netherlands informed the Secretariat that they had intended to abstain.]

The Acting President: Draft decision III is entitled "Problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus".

The First Committee adopted draft decision III without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision III was adopted.

The Acting President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote after the voting.

Mr. Alnajar (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): Our delegation shares the concerns of the delegations that voted in favour of draft resolution XXVI, entitled "The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation". Those concerns relate to disarmament and non-proliferation issues affecting regional and international peace and security.

Our delegation does not oppose resolution 59/91 on the Hague Code of Conduct. My country attaches particular importance to the Code and is continuing to study it in depth. We are therefore unable to take a definite position on its contents and are still awaiting instructions, which is why we abstained in the voting.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 65?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 66

Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly

Report of the First Committee (A/59/460)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it eight draft resolutions recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 25 of its report.

We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I to VIII one by one. After all the decisions have been taken, representatives will again have the opportunity to explain their votes or positions.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 59/96).

The Acting President: Draft resolution II is entitled "United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 59/97).

The Acting President: Draft resolution III is entitled "United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution III without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 59/98).

The Acting President: Draft resolution IV is entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution IV without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution IV was adopted (resolution 59/99).

The Acting President: Draft resolution V is entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution V without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution V was adopted (resolution 59/100).

The Acting President: Draft resolution VI is entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution VI without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution VI was adopted (resolution 59/101).

The Acting President: Draft resolution VII is entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

Draft resolution VII was adopted by 125 votes to 48, with 12 abstentions (resolution 59/102).

The Acting President: Draft resolution VIII is entitled "United Nations Disarmament Information Programme".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution VIII without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution VIII was adopted (resolution 59/103).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 66?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 67

Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session

Report of the First Committee (A/59/461)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 9 of its report.

I call on the representative of the United States to speak in explanation of vote.

Mrs. Hull (United States of America): The United States is not taking part in the General Assembly's decision on the report of the Disarmament Commission under agenda item 67 (d).

The Acting President: We will now take decisions on draft resolutions I and II.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Report of the Conference on Disarmament".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 59/104).

The Acting President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Report of the Disarmament Commission".

The First Committee adopted draft resolution II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 59/105).

The Acting President: May I take it that is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 67?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 68

The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East

Report of the First Committee (A/59/462)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East". A separate vote has been requested on the sixth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution.

I shall first put to the vote the sixth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, on which a separate vote has been requested.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

India, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Mauritius, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea.

The sixth preambular paragraph was retained by 169 votes to 6, with 4 abstentions.

The Acting President: I now put to the vote the draft resolution as a whole.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Australia, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Vanuatu.

The draft resolution was adopted by 170 votes to 5, with 9 abstentions (resolution 59/106).

The Acting President: I call on the representative of Canada to speak in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Laurin (Canada): I have taken the floor to explain Canada's vote in favour of the resolution entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East". It is important for Canada to ensure that our position is not misunderstood or misrepresented, and we would be vigilant in that regard.

In April 2004, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Resolution 1540 (2004) calls on all States

> "to promote the universal adoption and full implementation, and, where necessary, strengthening of multilateral treaties to which they are parties, whose aim is to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons". (*para. 8 (a)*)

Canada, an original signatory and State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), voted in favour of today's resolution in due consideration of a number of factors, not the least of which is stipulated in resolution 1540 (2004), which I have just quoted. Canada has judged today's resolution on its merit and determined that it is entirely consistent with Canada's long-standing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation policy. The resolution is firmly grounded in the consensus achieved by NPT States parties and reflected in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. Our vote in favour of the resolution was announced in the Canadian statement to the plenary of the General Assembly in the debate on agenda item 37, "Question of Palestine", on 30 November.

Canada urges Israel, in the crucial months leading up to the 2005 NPT Review Conference, to take the necessary first steps to adhere to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State. Canada further calls on all States in the Middle East region to comply fully with their NPT obligations and, in that regard, urges all States in the region that have not yet done so to sign and fully implement safeguard agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 68?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 69

Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects

Report of the First Committee (A/59/463)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution.

The First Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/107).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 69?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 70

Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region

Report of the First Committee (A/59/464)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution.

The First Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/108).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 70?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 71

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

Report of the First Committee (A/59/465)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Colombia, India, Mauritius, Syrian Arab Republic.

The draft resolution was adopted by 177 votes to 2, with 4 abstentions (resolution 59/109).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 71?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 72

Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction

Report of the First Committee (A/59/466)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution.

The First Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/110).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 72?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all of the reports of the First Committee before it.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.

United Nations A/59/PV.67

General Assembly
Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

67th plenary meeting

Monday, 6 December 2004, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ping .... (Gabon)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Dauth (Australia), Vice President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 94

Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/176)

Letter from Qatar (A/59/592)

Draft resolution (A/59/L.29)

The Acting President: This morning the General Assembly will, in accordance with Assembly resolution 57/164 of 18 December 2002, devote one plenary meeting to the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family under agenda item 94, "Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family".

Under that item, the Assembly has before it the following documents: the report of the Secretary-General circulated in document A/59/176, a letter dated 2 December 2004 from the representative of Qatar transmitting the text of the Doha Declaration of the Doha International Conference for the Family and contained in document A/59/592, as well as a draft resolution issued as document A/59/L.29.

I will now deliver the message of the President of the General Assembly on the occasion of the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

> "I wish to welcome all of you this morning to this plenary meeting of the General Assembly to observe the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family.
>
> "In the 10 years since the observance of the International Year of the Family, great attention has been given to family policies in many countries. The issue of family policy remains firmly the responsibility of national Governments and local authorities. Indeed, the General Assembly also decided that the major activities for the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family should be concentrated at the local, national and regional levels.
>
> "Governments continue to recognize the family as the primary means for people to live together and to provide mutual nurturing and support. At the same time, family situations continue to change and to diversify, and social disparities exist, especially in terms of structures, functions, living arrangements and living conditions. Consequently, many countries have found it necessary to review their own policies in

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an effort to keep abreast of changing family circumstances, needs and expectations.

"There is growing awareness that a more comprehensive approach should be taken to harmonize actions on behalf of the family. The family dimension should be taken into account in all aspects of policy and efforts made to ensure that sectoral policies complement those that deal directly with the family and its specific needs. It is, therefore, important for Governments to develop a more integrated family policy — taking into account education, employment, and health care issues, for instance — that effectively and visibly complements existing sectoral policies and attempts to meet the needs of individuals, while recognizing that they are also members of families. An integrated family policy should also overcome the difficulties of coordinating different social administrations and departments.

"Moreover, while the responsibility for developing family policy and considering the impact of other policies on families remains with national Governments, they will likely wish to work closely with civil society, the private sector and all other concerned actors in developing and implementing family policy frameworks. Local authorities should take part in drafting and evaluating the family policy, in implementing the policy measures and in adapting them to regional and local requirements.

"In preparation for the observance of the tenth anniversary, many Governments have taken measures that have long-term implications for family policies and programmes. It is, therefore, fitting to review some of the activities that have been taking place at the national level over the 10 years since the declaration of the International Year of the Family in 1994.

"During the past 10 years, encouraged by resolutions and recommendations of the General Assembly, a number of countries have reviewed their constitutions and legal systems regarding issues relating to families, children, adolescents and youth, older persons and persons with disabilities. Many countries have also enacted or considered new laws that directly benefit families. The laws and bills show that there is special interest in strengthening parent-child relations, dealing with conjugal and family disputes, helping people balance work and family responsibilities, protecting mothers and promoting measures related to the health and well-being of family members.

"Both central and local Governments have established policies, programmes or services that target families as beneficiaries, either directly or indirectly. A main objective is to allocate adequate financial benefits to families, in particular to those living in conditions of scarcity, in order to help them meet more readily the expenses associated with caring for family members.

"Several countries have organized national conferences to observe the tenth anniversary. Others have organized seminars and panel discussions, often in partnership with non-governmental organizations. I particularly welcome the Doha Declaration of 30 November 2004, which reaffirmed international commitments to the family, including United Nations resolutions and declarations, and called upon all Governments, international organizations and members of civil society to take effective measures to support the family in times of peace and in times of war.

"Governments everywhere have fulfilled their commitment to mark the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family. And while family policies remain firmly the responsibility of national Governments, the United Nations provides essential international attention, recognition, assistance and support to national Governments. One of the main objectives of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family is to revitalize public awareness of family issues and to renew support for family policies and programmes. In being here today, we are ensuring international attention for an issue of vital importance for all peoples of the world."

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: Concern for the well-being of families dates back to the earliest days of the United Nations. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims the family to be the "natural and fundamental group unit of society ... entitled to protection by society and the State" (*resolution 217 A (III), article 16, para. 3*). Our long-standing work for children, for the advancement of women, for health, for literacy and for social integration reflects an enduring, system-wide commitment to families.

The International Year of the Family was meant to intensify this focus and to promote greater awareness of what families contribute to economic development and social progress in all societies all over the world. Indeed, the Year's most far-reaching achievement was to raise the profile of a family perspective, which had never received attention commensurate with its importance. Today, we can note with satisfaction that the family dimension is increasingly reflected in national development policies and programmes, as well as in the activities of the United Nations system.

This anniversary is an opportunity to reaffirm the importance and centrality of the family. But it should also incite us to do more to address the challenges that families face. Families take many different forms. The situation of families varies from country to country, and within countries. But all confront very serious pressures. The AIDS epidemic, for example, is creating more and more orphans and imposing new burdens on caregivers such as grandparents. Migration, which can generate opportunities, can also increase vulnerability and keep families separated for extended periods of time. And, in many countries, efforts to reconcile work and family life are proving very difficult.

Family structures continue to change. Where once people lived in extended families, today they live increasingly in nuclear families. Decreasing fertility rates, increasing life expectancy, delayed marriage and growing numbers of people living alone contribute to smaller families. Traditional gender roles continue to evolve as more women work outside the home and more men contribute to the work within it. Those trends and phenomena are related and, in some cases, mutually reinforcing. They are also being spurred on by global integration.

In spite of strains and adversity, families are proving resilient, often in remarkable ways. They are doing their best to pull together and to continue serving as a source of strength and inspiration for their members. But they need help. Governments need to do more to help families adapt and thrive, so that they can, in turn, fulfil their social, cultural and economic roles.

One major challenge is to integrate family concerns with broader development and poverty eradication efforts. We must not forget that the family is a vital partner in efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the many other objectives set by the international community during the last decade.

Strong, healthy family structures are essential for human well-being as well. Families are often our first line of support. Policies and programmes must recognize such contributions. The United Nations, for its part, will continue to draw attention to family issues and to support Governments and civil society in their efforts to address them.

The Acting President: I give the floor to the representative of Qatar to introduce draft resolution A/59/L.29.

Mr. Al-Sulaiti (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the honour of introducing, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, draft resolution A/59/L.29, entitled "Celebrating the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family", submitted under item 94 of the agenda of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

The importance of family-related issues and the recognition of the fact that the role of the family in society is essential and vital enjoy universal acceptance, regardless of cultural, political or national backgrounds and interests. Major United Nations instruments on social policy and human rights, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Declaration on Social Progress and Development all emphasize the important role of the family in society and the fact that the greatest possible protection and assistance should be accorded to the family.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in paragraph 3 of article 16, put it eloquently and succinctly:

> "The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State."

Indeed, the General Assembly realized that the family, as the basic unit of social life, is a major agent of sustainable development at all levels of society. The General Assembly acknowledged also that the family is the fullest reflection, at the grass-roots level, of social and developmental strengths and weaknesses and, as such, offers uniquely comprehensive and synthesizing approaches to social issues.

The major United Nations conferences in the social field held in the 1990s all noted that the family, as the basic unit of society, should be strengthened and should receive comprehensive protection and support. The family-oriented provisions and the outcomes of those conferences and their follow-up processes provide guidance on ways to strengthen the family-centred components of policies and programmes as part of an integrated, comprehensive approach to development.

The General Assembly, in its resolutions 56/113 of 19 December 2001 and 57/164 of 18 December 2002, encouraged regional commissions and invited Member States to organize activities in preparation for an observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and to make efforts to achieve its objectives.

On 3 December 2003, the General Assembly welcomed the decision of Governments, non-governmental organizations and civil society to host conferences and events in observance of the tenth anniversary of the Year of the Family. It invited United Nations bodies and agencies and civil society to support regional events in 2004. Events were held on 15 May 2004, the International Day of Families, and throughout the year. Today, even before the year is over, we can see that the response of the international community has been strong and that productive action will be taken to protect and support the family.

In drafting this text, the principal sponsors kept in mind the fact that its main purpose is to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, as its title reads, and to recognize the positive response of civil society to the call made last year by the General Assembly to commemorate this anniversary. The sponsors were intent on drafting a resolution that is concise, to the point and contains elements compatible with its purpose and that are appropriate for adoption at this special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly.

After document A/59/L.29 was issued, and in order to address the concerns expressed by other delegations about parts of the text, the sponsors of the draft resolution made the following revisions.

The last two words of the fourth preambular paragraph have been replaced by the following phrase: "pertinent to the International Year of the Family". In the middle of the fifth preambular paragraph, the phrase "in support of the family" has been replaced by the phrase "in disregard". Operative paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 have been replaced by the following paragraphs.

Operative paragraph 3 now reads:

> "Commends the important contributions made by Governments on the international, national and regional and local levels to observe the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family".

Operative paragraph 4 now reads:

> "Welcomes the hosting of the Regional Conference on the Family in Africa by Benin and takes note with appreciation of the Plan of Action on the Family in Africa".

Operative paragraph 5 now reads:

> "Welcomes the hosting of the Doha International Conference for the Family by the State of Qatar and takes note with appreciation of the Doha Declaration".

Operative paragraph 8 has been replaced by the following paragraph:

> "Recommends that all relevant actors, including, inter alia, Governments and civil society, including relevant non-governmental organizations and research and academic institutions, contribute to developing strategies and programmes aimed at strengthening the livelihood of families".

Operative paragraph 10 has been replaced by the following paragraph:

> "Decides to celebrate the anniversary of the International Year of the Family periodically on a 10-year basis".

These revisions eliminate contentious language and the result is a balanced text that the sponsors believe can be adopted by consensus.

Since document A/59/L.29 was issued, the following Member States have joined the list of sponsors: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Republic of Moldova and the United States of America. We thank the sponsors of the draft resolution and urge Assembly members to adopt it by consensus at today's special commemorative meeting.

I shall now speak on behalf of the State of Qatar.

I am honoured to report to the General Assembly the extensive activities carried out by the State of Qatar to promote and celebrate the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family under the patronage and generosity of Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser al-Misnad, consort of His Highness the Emir of the State of Qatar, and president of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs.

Qatar convened the Doha International Conference for the Family on 29 and 30 November 2004. The decision to host the Conference was welcomed by resolution 58/15 of 15 December 2003. The Conference analysed and reaffirmed article 16, paragraph 3, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which proclaims that the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State. The Conference brought together a broad range of stakeholders representing diverse religions, groupings, political systems and States. Those stakeholders were united by the common understanding that, by protecting the natural and fundamental group unit of society, communities, nations, regions and the world, will not only encourage sustainable development but further the intercultural understanding that is the necessary foundation of a stable, secure and just world.

As noted by the Secretary-General in paragraph 4 of his report (A/59/176) on this item,

> "families have major, albeit often untapped potential to contribute to national development and to the achievement of major objectives of every society and of the United Nations, including the eradication of poverty and the creation of just, stable and secure societies."

The Doha International Conference for the family was designed to begin to bridge this gap. The Conference reaffirmed fundamental international norms related to the family and established proposals for action that will provide a firm foundation for research, discussion and policy development related to family life during the coming decade.

The preparatory process for the Doha Conference included Government meetings in Cotonou, Benin; Baku, Azerbaijan; and Riga, Latvia. The process was also enriched by a series of regional dialogues in Mexico City, Stockholm, Geneva, and Kuala Lumpur.

In addition, hundreds of civil society meetings were organized by local community groups in over 134 cities around the world. The declarations, papers, essays, personal statements, findings and proposals for action developed at those events were submitted to the Secretariat, and two significant reports were prepared. The first is a compilation of the results emerging from over 200 community meetings; the second, entitled "A Family in the Third Millennium", provides an initial look at more than 2,000 pages of scholarship, research and academic findings collected during preparatory proceedings.

Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Misnad, Consort of His Highness the Emir of Qatar and President of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, delivered the opening plenary address of the Conference. Her Highness acknowledged the important role of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in focusing the world's attention on the family. She stressed the need to strengthen the family at the start of the new millennium and announced the establishment of an international institute for the study of the family.

The plenary meeting of the Doha Conference included remarks by Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Africa. Subsequent topical meetings of the Conference addressed such major questions as the family in the third millennium, the legal and religious foundations for the family in the third millennium, the family and education and the family and social dialogue.

During the Conference, the Doha Declaration was negotiated by an intergovernmental negotiating committee composed of representatives from Governments around the world. The balanced and careful language of the Doha Declaration was finalized after thorough consideration of all the views presented.

The Doha Declaration reaffirms the commitment of the international community to the family, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other United Nations documents. Its opening paragraphs review the goals and objectives of the tenth anniversary observance of the International Year of the Family and recall the preparatory process of the Doha International

Conference for the Family. The operative paragraphs reaffirm international commitments to the family and call for appropriate action to implement those commitments.

The Doha International Conference for the Family encouraged a broad range of partners to consider how best to provide the family with protection by society and State, as guaranteed under article 16 (3) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Conference energized representatives of Governments and non-governmental organizations and members of civil society to take action to realize the promise of the Universal Declaration.

The State of Qatar is honoured to have hosted the Doha International Conference for the Family. It will take affirmative steps not only to achieve the objectives of the tenth anniversary celebration, but also to implement the promises of the international community to the family, as contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, among other documents. The first "Call for Action" contained in the Doha Declaration urges the development of programmes to stimulate and encourage dialogue among countries, religions, cultures and civilizations on questions related to the family. The State of Qatar will take concrete steps to meet the objectives of the first "Call for Action".

At the concluding session of the Conference, Her Highness Sheikha Mozah reaffirmed the State of Qatar's commitment, announced during the opening plenary session, to establish an international institute for study of the family, to be dedicated to researching, supporting and implementing the Doha Declaration.

The tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family provides an opportunity to hope that by protecting and promoting the family, the world can create the just, stable and secure societies it so sorely needs. The family, as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims, is indeed the "natural and fundamental group unit of society". The Doha International Conference for the Family has provided essential support to the family so that it and the world can thrive.

The Acting President: I give the floor to the Netherlands, who will speak on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. Van den Berg (Netherlands): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Croatia, the countries of the stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

Today we celebrate the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family. It provides us with the opportunity to reiterate our recognition of the important role of families in society. The EU continues to support the implementation of the Copenhagen summit and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, pursuing the aim of eradicating poverty and promoting social development. We remain convinced that the objectives set forth in the context of these international forums provide a framework for the protection of the family as a key element in forging stronger and more coherent models for development throughout the world.

In celebrating this tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, the European Union reaffirms its commitment to such ideals and reiterates its support for cohesive policies, carried out on local and international levels, enhancing the condition of families throughout the world and embracing social inclusion as a means of eradicating poverty and discrimination.

In Copenhagen, we all agreed that there was continued recognition that the family is the basic unit of society and is a strong force of social cohesion and integration. In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist. Although the family is the basic unit of society, its concept and composition have changed over the course of time, illustrating the fact that the family is a living, dynamic entity.

For instance, within the European Union, there has been a substantial increase in the number of single-person households, and there are projections that by the year 2025 such households will exceed 60 million and will represent almost a third of all family structures.

Every individual of full age has the right to found a family. It is not up to the State to impose limitations in that respect on the basis of race, nationality, religion, sexual orientation or any other status. While recalling that marriage should be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses, the EU expresses concern with regard to the negative implications that may result from early marriages, in particular with reference to early child-bearing and maternal mortality.

In this context, the EU reaffirms its strong support for and commitment to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in its advancement of sexual and reproductive health and rights. Improving the ability of women and young people to choose when and how often to have children is the basis for creating strong families and protecting the health of both their families and of themselves.

We need to ensure the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all individual family members, including children. In that regard, the European Union would like to note the continued relevance of General Recommendation 21 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, concerning equality in marriage and family relations. One of the primary rights of family members is easy access to health and social services and to accurate, comprehensive information. That is particularly important when they have to handle issues related to the care of family members who are not self-sufficient. Focused health-care and home-care services can be of crucial importance when families have to take care of members with disabilities. Equally vital are childcare and home-care services, counselling and mediation services in dealing with separation or divorce.

A stable family is based on principles of equity, justice and individual fulfilment for each member. Each partner must, therefore, have the right to choose a profession or employment that is best suited to his or her abilities, qualifications and aspirations, as provided in article 11 (a) and (c) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

In that context, the European Union reaffirms its strong support for and commitment to the Beijing and Beijing + 5 agenda. We welcome the ten-year review of that agenda in 2005 as an opportunity to identify its gaps and challenges. That review should result in renewed inspiration and reinforce our joint efforts to advance the cause of gender equality and women's empowerment.

As for children, their best interests need to be one of our primary considerations. The role of families in the realization of children's rights is fundamental and cannot be underestimated. That is particularly important and urgent for families affected by HIV/AIDS. AIDS has already orphaned 14 million children worldwide — a number that is expected to exceed 25 million by 2010. More and more adolescent girls and grandmothers are becoming heads of household and they need increased support.

Families need to provide a safe environment, including care and protection, for children. The Convention on the Rights of the Child provides the international legal framework for the promotion and protection of children's rights. We therefore urge all States that have not yet done so, to become parties to the Convention of the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols.

Violence within the family occurs in every single country. That form of violence cannot, under any circumstance, be treated as a private matter. Domestic violence, including marital rape, needs to be criminalized. Child abuse and neglect need to be eradicated. In that regard, the European Union welcomes the progress report on the Secretary-General's study on violence against children, which has been compiled by Mr. Pinheiro, an independent expert to the Third Committee. We look forward to the report on an in-depth study on violence against women.

The European Union is deeply committed to family-related issues. As far back as August 1989, the European Commission published its first communiqué on family policies. That was followed by important actions, such as the 1996 Directive on Parental Leave. Some major areas addressed in those documents are: reconciling family and work life and improving the living conditions of vulnerable families, such as large low-income families, single parent families, jobless households, or families affected by domestic violence, alcoholism or sex abuse. In that regard, the European Union has focused on the risks and barriers that limit people's access to society. For example, growing up in a vulnerable family has come to be seen as a major factor in the intergenerational transmission of poverty and social exclusion.

The first draft joint report on social inclusion, which was adopted on 10 October 2001 in the form of a Commission communication to the Council, the

European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, singled out eight core challenges, ranging from the preservation of family solidarity to the protection of the rights of children, and identifies new ways of supporting families in order to prevent poverty and social exclusion while promoting equality between men and women.

The importance that the European Union attaches to the role of families is exemplified by the Conference on Families, Change and Social Policy in Europe organized by the Irish Presidency of the European Union, which took place in May 2004. The Conference focused on an exchange of ideas with a view toward more effectively supporting families throughout the European Union. At the invitation of the German Government, a conference of the European ministers for family affairs will take place in Berlin in December in order to discuss those challenges.

Mr. Mekdad (Syria), Vice President, took the Chair.

In order to implement policies that support families, the European Union strongly encourages the formation of partnerships involving all interested stakeholders at local, regional, national and international levels. In that spirit of cooperation, the European Union looks forward to related future discussions in the context of the United Nations, which should fully take into account the commitments made at the Copenhagen, Cairo, Beijing, Madrid and other relevant United Nations summits. Rather than focusing on ideologies, such discussions should focus on the implementation of those commitments and their impact on whole families, as well as on individual family members.

Ms. Latoundji Lauriano (Benin) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to sincerely congratulate the President on his election to the presidency of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. We would also like to thank him on behalf of the Government of Benin for his efforts to ensure the success of the work of the current session.

African ministers for the family, who met at the Regional Conference on the Family in Africa in Cotonou, Benin on 27 and 28 July 2004, entrusted my country, the Republic of Benin, with the mission of introducing the Plan of Action on the Family in Africa as Africa's contribution to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family. It is with true pleasure and a feeling of legitimate pride that from this rostrum I take the floor today, Monday, 6 December 2004, to participate in the commemorative ceremony of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

Africa is especially gratified by the fact that for decades now the United Nations, through its institutions and together with our respective States, has fought to gradually improve conditions in the social sphere.

That is why I would like, on behalf of the Government of Benin, as well as on my own behalf, respectfully and enthusiastically to recognize the hard work done by the bodies of the United Nations system and the African Union in preparing for the tenth anniversary commemoration of the International Year of the Family.

It was indeed felicitous that the General Assembly took the initiative, through its resolution 44/82 of 8 December 1989, of proclaiming 1994 to be the International Year of the Family. That initiative was taken with a view toward heightening the awareness of Governments, decision-makers and the general public about issues pertaining to the family, and was aimed at fostering activities in support of families.

The family has a vital role to play in sustainable development at the individual, community and national levels. For generations, particularly in Africa, it has been a bastion of strength, an anchor, a frame of reference and a source of identity for people. In the event of crisis — unemployment, illness, poverty, old age or distress — the majority of Africans rely on the family as the main source of material, social and emotional support and of social security.

The socio-economic environment in which families find themselves today has changed greatly, and profound structural, organizational and relational reforms are needed. Indeed, a decade after the institutionalization of the International Year of the Family, we must note that the family is more than ever before threatened with dislocation, given the combined negative effects of, inter alia, poverty, armed conflicts, poor governance, unemployment, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, insufficient social security mechanisms and depopulation.

According to a United Nations report, despite some achievements, many crucial issues remain unresolved, and certain contrasts persist in the pro-family policies that have been adopted. The International Year of the Family has not led to the development of a long-term global action plan for families. The tenth anniversary was thus an opportunity to provide new impetus to the follow-up of the International Year of the Family.

Therefore, it was urgent that we think about and define effective strategies to save the family and to preserve its socializing, humanizing and fulfilling role. That is why we believe that the Maputo Summit, held in July 2003, was so important. On the eve of the tenth anniversary, it provided a new starting point in the process of defining a real policy aimed at strengthening family values.

Indeed, having perceived the danger looming in the future to what society holds most sacred, the heads of State, by adopting decision EX/CL/Dec.65 (III) at the third ordinary session of the Executive Council of the African Union, took a historic step by mandating the African Union Commission — with the support of partners of the great family of the United Nations system and of other strategic social partners — to draft a Plan of Action on the Family in Africa, which would be Africa's contribution to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

The Plan takes into consideration our own cultural realities as well as global developments. It is a realistic and feasible Plan that will not be relegated to the dusty shelf of neglect or indifference; a relevant Plan of Action whose effective and efficient implementation will give a new face and renewed vitality to the African family; a Plan of Action that will be our basic law and our guide in restoring the family and its lofty position of dignity.

The draft of the Plan was studied by experts from all the countries members of the African Union on 8 and 9 March 2004 at its headquarters in Addis Ababa, during a meeting over which I had the honour to preside. My active participation in that meeting of highly qualified experts attested to the keen sense of responsibility of the Government of President Mathieu Kérékou, given the mission that the international community and the African continent, through the African Union, have entrusted to my country, Benin.

Validated at Cotonou in April 2004 during the second ordinary session of the African Union's Labour and Social Affairs Commission, the Plan was adopted by the heads of State at the African Union summit, held in Addis Ababa on 8 July 2004. It was finally launched on 27 July 2004 in Cotonou during the Regional Conference on the Family in Africa, which focused on strategies for the implementation, follow up and assessment of the Plan of Action on the Family in Africa.

The goal of the Plan of Action on the Family in Africa is to strengthen the family, to ensure that the needs of all families are taken into consideration and to improve families' well-being and living conditions. The Plan of Action should also serve as a guide for African Union member States in drafting, following up and assessing appropriate national pro-family policies and programmes. In short, it will be an instrument that each member State will implement, taking into consideration its own specific needs and sociological realities.

The Plan of Action on the Family in Africa highlights nine priority areas: reducing poverty; the right to social services; fighting the main causes of morbidity and mortality; rights, duties and responsibilities; the right to protection of the family; strengthening family relations; promoting protection of the environment; peace and security; and follow-up, assessment and monitoring. Sixteen objectives have been identified as a framework for implementation in those areas, and 47 strategies have been endorsed to ensure the implementation, follow-up and assessment of the Plan of Action.

At the Cotonou meeting in July, all African Union member States pledged to translate the Plan of Action into concrete and relevant actions and to make it their basic law with regard to rehabilitating the family unit, henceforth recognized as a special partner of the State. They also pledged to ensure that the document would receive particular attention from development financing institutions on the basis of the Millennium Development Goals, the New Partnership for Africa's Development and related national approaches described in poverty reduction strategy papers.

I cannot conclude without expressing, on behalf of the Government and people of Benin and all of Africa, our most heartfelt thanks to the United Nations, which, through General Assembly resolution 58/15 of 3 December 2003, agreed to Benin's request to organize a conference at the continental level in the context of observing the tenth anniversary of the

International Year of the Family. By doing so, it enabled my country to play a major role in celebrating the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and in developing strategies for the implementation, follow-up and assessment of the Plan of Action on the Family in Africa.

The main task that we must still accomplish following the Cotonou meeting is to draft and implement the national plans of action on the family. Therefore, I would now like to request support from our various partners to finance the implementation of those documents.

Long live the International Year of the Family! Long live the Plan of Action on the Family in Africa! Long live international cooperation for effective and efficient implementation of the Plan of Action on the Family in Africa!

Mr. Abdul Ghafor (Brunei Darussalam): I have the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of the States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN): Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

We in ASEAN would like to join others in extending our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his efforts on the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, including for his reports contained in documents E/CN.5/2004/3 and A/59/176. We also associate ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family is an opportunity to reaffirm the commitment made by United Nations Member States to enhance their action in incorporating effective family policies and programmes into their national development strategies. Our debate today is an important contribution to promoting issues related to the family by enhancing cooperation among Member States through an exchange of information and experiences.

In that regard, we would like to highlight some of our regional efforts to promote issues related to the family within the overall development of ASEAN. One of the common features of the peoples of our region has always been the strong family bond that is part of our societies, with families making important contributions to economic activities and social welfare. ASEAN is committed to strive for sustainable economic progress for all its members and realizes the important contribution of families to overall economic development.

Last week, during the tenth ASEAN Summit, held in Vientiane, Laos, ASEAN leaders reaffirmed their commitment on enhancing effective family policies and programmes as part of ASEAN members' national development strategies. The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Plan of Action was adopted, in which ASEAN members would be linked together in partnerships as a community of caring societies. The ASEAN socio-cultural community will also intensify cooperation in addressing family-related problems associated with population growth, education, unemployment and the prevention of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and SARS.

The ASEAN Work Programme on Social Welfare, Family and Population for 2003-2006 aims at assisting ASEAN members in achieving one of the objectives of ASEAN Vision 2020, in which families, as the basic units of society, tend to their family members, particularly children, youth, women and the elderly, and are capable of meeting new challenges arising from rapid social and economic change. The Work Programme identifies priorities for regional cooperation in social welfare and family and population, taking into account emerging challenges arising from demographic developments in the region and the implications of the changing structure of the family.

Many activities have been planned with specific objectives in mind. The Work Programme sets out activities designed to strengthen and intensify regional cooperation in enhancing the role of families, communities, civil society, the private sector and the Government in managing social problems, meeting human needs and maximizing opportunities for development. It also enhances ASEAN member States' capacity to anticipate and manage the social consequences of rapid demographic, political, social and economic change. The use of development and participatory approaches is important in helping the marginalized and disadvantaged to become independent and in facilitating their integration into society. The capacity of social welfare and social development ministries must also be enhanced in order to mainstream social concerns into the national development agenda.

In line with those strategies, important activities have already been undertaken by the relevant Government agencies in the region, such as strengthening capacities for carrying out social impact assessments, including an assessment of the impact of development on the institution of the family and policy research on the changing structure of the family.

Moreover, ASEAN is also in the process of developing joint approaches and sharing lessons learned in solving family and social problems as well as documenting effective policies and best practice cases for strengthening support for family care provision, including public policy for strengthening traditional family values.

We note the important work that has been done in the area of research on family-related issues. It provides an opportunity for further research work by all relevant organizations and bodies. We also note with appreciation the efforts of the United Nations and its related agencies in supporting Member States' promotion of family-specific activities and programmes and in supporting policy development.

It is important that cooperation among Member States, regional and international agencies and civil society groups be enhanced, in order to increase our capacity to manage the challenges related to the family. Through such cooperation, the international community will be closer to creating secure, just, free and harmonious societies offering opportunities and a higher standard of living for all.

Mr. Xie Bohua (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation subscribes to the statement made by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and wishes to express its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family (A/59/176).

Since, at its forty-fourth session, the General Assembly proclaimed 1994 as the International Year of the Family, the theme of "Family: resources and responsibilities in a changing world" has become a topical concept in social development and an important item on the international agenda. That is a gratifying development.

The issue of the family is old and complex. It not only involves individual families, but also has a bearing upon social cohesion and stability, as well as an international dimension. As we mark the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, I would like to offer the following observations.

First, Governments must incorporate the family perspective into social development policies and programmes and deploy all resources, including laws, regulations and appropriate measures, to foster a stable, harmonious and caring environment and to protect the interests of the family and its individual members. Importance must be given to the family as the basic unit of society with a view to promoting an integrated, equitable and balanced development of the society.

Secondly, the international community must take measures to increase global awareness of the importance of the family. While the specific issues related to the family may differ from country to country, the pursuit of happiness, stability and harmony is an aspiration and an inherent right shared by all families in the world. Accordingly, the international community must take a broader view in formulating policies and taking measures on the basis of equality, solidarity and mutual respect to create an enabling international environment that facilitates national efforts for family stability and problem-solving.

The Chinese nation takes pride in its long history and its many good traditions. Already in ancient times, Chinese sages advocated the philosophy of family harmony leading to good government and, in turn, to universal peace. They argued for balance between state and family interests, reverence for the old and care for the young, and stressed family harmony and stability. Since the founding of the new China, the Government has sought to ensure family harmony and stability through legal protection, policy guidance and moral restraints. The saying that prosperity follows family harmony has been a motto for every family in China seeking happiness. The relevant Government agencies have sponsored a host of family-oriented activities, such as the five-virtues family award, family cultural and art festivals and projects aimed at promoting the civilized family.

To mark the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, a world summit on the family, jointly sponsored by China's National Population and Family Planning Committee and the World Family Organization, is being held today in the city of Sanya in China's Hainan Province. The summit is to comprehensively review and assess the progress made since the proclamation of the International Year of the Family and to promote the realization of the Millennium Development Goals from a family perspective. We hope the summit will yield positive results and be crowned with success.

Mr. Mabhongo (South Africa): My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the delegation of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. South Africa had the honour to take part in the development of the Plan of Action on the Family in Africa during the meeting held in Cotonou, Benin. We therefore support the Plan of Action on the Family in Africa, as presented this morning by Minister Lauriano of Benin. We are therefore also pleased to participate in this celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

The South African Government used this anniversary to promote the family and to announce policy and programme changes specifically aimed at strengthening the family. As part of our celebrations of the International Year, our Government, through the Minister of Social Development, Mr. Zola Skweyiya, released a plan of action for the International Year of the Family and beyond which is aimed at integrating service delivery to families.

The family is recognized throughout humanity as an important and basic element of social existence. In South Africa, we regard the family not only as a potentially powerful agent for political, economic, cultural and social change, but also as a potent vehicle for the care, protection and development of its members. However, factors such as poverty, unemployment, HIV/AIDS, domestic violence, crime and the disintegration of family life are some of the difficulties that South African families experience. The disintegration of family life in particular impacts negatively on the well-being of family members and can lead to moral decay, thus affecting the very fibre of society. Furthermore, it is widely acknowledged that all South African families have been affected by the social, political and economic conditions of colonization, apartheid and urbanization.

As a result of those phenomena, family members have traditionally moved away from their homes to find employment and economic opportunities elsewhere. These and other social changes have led to an increase in non-traditional family forms such as single parenthood, childless marriages, reconstituted and blended family forms and the general fragmentation of families.

These conditions and trends and the desire to accelerate the improvement of the quality of life for all have made the family, from the South African perspective, an important and critical developmental entity. In this regard, South Africa is focusing on prioritizing, among other things, on the rebuilding of families, communities and social relationships, as well as on the restoration of the ethics of care and human development in all welfare programmes.

South Africa's social welfare policy recognizes the need to preserve the family as a unit in which children are raised to be healthy and which would promote the full integration of women and other vulnerable groups into the economy. Besides welfare and social security services, my Government provides a range of other services to individual members of families, to groups of families and to communities, in line with our Constitution and with the aim of promoting a good quality of life for all people.

In the past 10 years, nearly half a million households in South Africa have benefited through a national food emergency scheme, which is part of an integrated approach to eradicate food shortages and food insecurity. In the past year poverty relief projects have benefited a large number of South African women. The projects focus on building self-reliant communities and a culture of sustainable development. The majority of the poverty relief projects are rurally based,

Ongoing support is also provided to child-headed households, orphaned children and children affected by HIV/AIDS. Through partnerships with faith-based and other civil society organizations, the number of children living in poverty who benefit from the child support grant has substantially increased.

It is important that the principles that guided the United Nations to proclaim the International Year of the Family be commemorated. Measures will also be needed to ensure that appropriate evaluation of progress is made and that obstacles encountered both prior to and during the International Year of the Family are addressed in order to ensure its success and adequate follow-up.

South Africa is committed to strengthening and preserving families within communities for a better life for all, especially for children. It is important to note that while progress has been made, the integration of plans to improve on present services and to address gaps in respect of families remains a critical objective.

In that regard, South Africa is currently in the process of finalizing a comprehensive policy on families, the aim of which is to facilitate and guide integrated service delivery to families at the provincial and local government levels. This policy will be launched in March 2005 at the International Conference on Families, to be held in South Africa. The Conference will seek to increase awareness among all national and international stakeholders on the importance and centrality of the family as a basic unit of society. It will also seek to create awareness of the family's centrality in all sustainable development strategies. The Conference will further promote an understanding of the effects of the different political, environmental, sociocultural and economic conditions facing families in South Africa.

Mr. Moeini Meybodi (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, I would like to associate my delegation with the statement made by Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report.

The observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family by the General Assembly provides us with an excellent opportunity to evaluate the achievements made thus far in implementing the objectives set for this great occasion. Today's meeting also underscores the importance of the institution of the family for the international community. Clearly, the attainment of these objectives depends on our individual and collective fulfilment of our commitments towards the strengthening and the consolidation of this basic foundation of all societies. Indeed, we have gathered here today to renew our commitments to that end.

The various General Assembly resolutions on the issue of family contain a variety of policy recommendations and actions to be implemented by Governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders. We therefore need to assess carefully and vigilantly our policies and actions taken in line with the Assembly's recommendations, particularly in areas such as strengthening the capacity of national institutions to formulate, implement and monitor family-related policies; strengthening and supporting the institution of the family in performing its societal and developmental functions; effectively addressing the needs of families in the era of globalization; and enhancing cooperation and coordination in strengthening and integrating the family perspective in the work of international organizations, including the United Nations system. A proper, factual assessment of the present situation helps us to better understand the extent to which our actions and practices have furthered the goals set by the General Assembly.

Undoubtedly, the General Assembly's continuous and persistent attention to the issue of the family, at least since 1989, has raised global awareness of the contribution of the family to the sustainable social, economic and cultural development of societies. The Assembly's work on the agenda item on the family has also highlighted the numerous challenges that families, as well as countries and the international community, all face, such as the integration of family policies in the strategic planning for our countries, the rights of individual members of the family, the reconciliation of family responsibilities with work and the socio-economic well-being of the family.

Since the adoption of the General Assembly resolution on the International Year of Family, various initiatives and activities have been undertaken at the national, regional and global levels with a view to giving the institution of the family greater recognition and, consequently, promoting and strengthening its status worldwide. In that context, the conference held in Doha last week was an important and useful initiative. In fact, such initiatives and efforts have not only brought further recognition of the family's important role in maintaining the stability and sustainability of human society but have also underlined the need to strengthen and protect that basic unit of society and to address the challenges that families are grappling with.

Many of the recommendations contained in various United Nations resolutions have long been implemented in Iran, as a result of the solid legal and cultural foundations that have constantly and progressively preserved the tranquillity and the socio-economic stability of the family all over the country. In that regard, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in pursuing the teachings of Islam and its cultural values and in fulfilling its international obligations, is fully committed to continuing its efforts to ensure the necessary protection of the institution of the family and its members.

Some of the concrete measures undertaken by the relevant authorities and stakeholders in Iran include integrating the family perspective into the five-year national development plans and, accordingly, allocating the necessary budget resources for the protection and the promotion of families; providing grants and loans with preferential terms to needy families, especially to female-headed families; providing public health services to low-income families, especially in rural areas; and establishing consultative centres at the local and national levels to provide advice to those in need. Those consultative services are basically demand-oriented and are provided for various family-related issues such as health, education, employment and family planning. The services are usually provided free of charge by the Government, civil society or non-governmental organizations.

Other such measures include the provision of the necessary social security and protection to women and girls, as they are the most vulnerable groups of society. In addition, orphans and widows are protected, as are mothers, especially during pregnancy. There is extensive investment in the education and health sectors, paying particular attention to women and girls, especially in rural areas. The role of pro-family non-governmental organizations is promoted, as is the participation of civil society and academic and research institutions in designing and implementing family-related policies and programmes aimed at strengthening and maintaining the integrity and the well-being of families.

The Government formulates, amends and updates the relevant regulations, laws and executive orders intended to provide further protection and ensure the rights of children and women with respect to violence and abuse. Public organizations have established arrangements and mechanisms providing a variety of facilities and services for the protection of the family and its integrity. Various committees and working groups have been established in several branches of the Government to deal with specific problems that female family members may face, such as violence, unemployment, old age, drugs, abuse and HIV/AIDS.

Despite extensive efforts at the national and international levels, much remains to be done to create an enabling environment for strengthening and protecting the institution of the family. Many families across the globe are still suffering from poverty, exclusion, discrimination and oppression. Our common responsibility as human beings requires us to make every effort to alleviate that suffering and create the conditions conducive to making prosperous families.

It is our strong belief that the family, which is the result of the union between a man and a woman, should enjoy the broadest protection and assistance from Governments and the international community. The concept of the family may be interpreted differently in different cultures and legal systems, and we are aware that a consensus has yet to be reached among the Member States of the Organization on a single definition of the family. However, such a situation should not place a hurdle in the way of our collective endeavours to enhance the safety and the integrity of our societies by creating and preserving sound and healthy families. In our view, the lack of common understanding on the definition of the family is not a major global problem requiring this world body to depart from its traditional practice relating to the issue of the family.

Moreover, the United Nations system in general, and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in particular, needs to further strengthen its activities by, inter alia, integrating the family perspective in the work of its funds, programmes and agencies. The United Nations should also follow up and effectively monitor implementation by all Member States of its various resolutions on the family. In doing so, it needs to adequately address the adverse consequences of calamities such as poverty, drugs, unemployment, natural disasters and conflicts on the stability and the sustainability of families in different countries. That mission cannot be accomplished without the active involvement of various commissions and institutions of the United Nations. In that context, the role of the Commission for Social Development is pivotal in taking an integrated approach to the question of the family and its needs. We therefore support the idea of maintaining the family as a standing item on the Commission's agenda.

It is imperative for all of us as Members of this world Organization to continue our efforts to protect and enhance the stature and the dignity of the family in our communities. We all share the view that the institution of the family is the basic unit of every society and that a safe and healthy environment for it contributes greatly to social and economic development and the stability of the society. Indeed, a sound society is composed of sound families. Thus, we should all strive to strengthen and protect the institution of the family, as it is a primary and effective vehicle for the promotion of fair, just and peaceful relations among all members of the global community.

Mr. López Clemente (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, we would like to welcome the convening of this event in the General Assembly. Meetings such as today's devoted to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family show that the United Nations should continue to be the main forum in which concerted work is done at the international level on all items related to the social development of our countries.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, one of the benchmarks for most of the international commitments adopted to make our world a better place, states:

> "The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State."

It was later recognized that the family assumes various forms and functions as a result of the diversity of cultures and societies coexisting on earth.

Nothing can be more relevant, in the complex circumstances that have been created by neo-liberal globalization, than to recall the role of the family and the assistance and protection that it requires from the State. The results of various studies on the family indicate that there is a change in dynamics of the structure of the family. It is growing smaller in number of members. The studies assess the impact on families of the growing number of elderly people, migration and major pandemics such as HIV/AIDS.

The framing of family policies should envisage all general aspects in order to ensure that there is real protection and assistance given to this basic nucleus of society. Other elements should be considered if one really wants to support the institution we know as the family.

Any effort taken by Governments, particularly in the third world, devoted to promoting well-being for all families, will be in vain if the conditions of the unjust international order that currently exists are not changed. Accordingly, 20 per cent of the population in developed countries consume 86 per cent of what is produced. Eighty per cent are fighting poverty and have diminished opportunities. 1.2 billion persons throughout the world are living in extreme poverty. 800 million persons are going hungry. More than 115 million children have no access to education, and there are 876 million illiterates throughout the world.

In such circumstances, how would it be possible to strengthen the family if many of them do not even have access to basic health and education services. Meanwhile, their members watch, powerless, as more than 10 million children die each year from preventable disease. More than 500,000 women die during pregnancy and labour and 42 million are sick with AIDS. Malaria takes a million victims per year and a billion people lack access to safe drinking water and 2,400 million individuals have no health services. The crushing external debt steals resources that are desperately needed to finance the policies to support and protect families.

In 2003 alone, creditors received $436 billion. This exorbitant figure contrasts with $68.4 billion distributed as official development assistance. As a matter of urgency, measures must be taken to change the picture. This situation is simply unsustainable.

The Cuban Government has always been involved in continuously seeking resources, alternatives and solutions to economic and social problems in order to guarantee basic services and empower various sectors of society by means of just policies that encourage participation and offer equal opportunities and access. The economic and social policies that have always characterized our Cuban revolutionary project have been in keeping with the aspirations and objectives of equity and justice that we seek for our entire population.

Such policies are being continued, despite over 45 years of American hostility, one of the worst examples of which was the genocidal unilateral blockade imposed upon our people, reinforced by new measures that were adopted by the Government of the United States on 6 May and put into practice on 30 June 2004. The boundless obsession to overthrow the Cuban revolution has led the American Administration to arrogate to itself the inconceivable power of redefining the scope and confines of the Cuban family, restricting it to grandparents, nieces and nephews, parents, brothers and sisters, spouses and children. In other words, in accordance with this narrow concept, now an aunt, a cousin or any other relative is no longer a part of the family of Cubans who reside in the United States.

Under the newly set limitations, relatives' remittances can only be sent to that category of relatives, and all Cubans living in the United States who send medication, money or any other kind of articles to uncles, cousins or other categories of relatives or close friends in Cuba will be subject to penalties. The same is happening with the restriction of family visits to one visit every three years and then only with the express authorization of the Department of the Treasury, if it agrees that there are humanitarian grounds justifying such family contact.

The World Summit on Social Development, held in Copenhagen in 1995, reaffirmed in paragraph 80 of its Programme of Action that "The family is the basic unit of society and as such should be strengthened". What is more, it acknowledged: "In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exists." The American Administration, in its desire to damage the Cuban nation, is trying to deny the identity of Cuban families, and is rejecting their inclusion in the categories of relationship that traditionally have been intrinsic and inalienable to this basic unit of the Cuban people.

Every effort to debase the Cuban people will be useless. The results speak for themselves. Cuba has a literacy level of 99.8 per cent. A hundred per cent of the Cuban population has free access to high-quality health services. The infantile mortality rate has been reduced to 6 per thousand live births. All children are protected against 13 preventable diseases. More than 95 per cent of the country receives electricity and 80 per cent of the rural population has access to safe drinking water. Sixty-five per cent of our current expenditures in budgeted activities are devoted to providing universal access to education and health services, to promoting national culture and to ensuring social security and social assistance, which cover the entire Cuban population.

As we celebrate the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, our delegation would like to thank the Government of the State of Qatar for having organized the International Conference on the Family in Doha. Events such as this will contribute to greater international cooperation in social development and protecting and assisting the broad range of families throughout the world. Cuba would like to avail itself of this opportunity to reiterate its commitment to ensure that there will be genuine constructive international cooperation in this connection.

This is highly important in order to build societies that are more just for all. It is only through lower arms expenditures, sincere international cooperation, true tolerance and full respect for the diversity of cultures and political and social systems, that it will be possible for our families to find a world better for them and for coming generations.

Ms. Al Haj Ali (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): First, I have the honour of supporting the statement made by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The General Assembly's commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family shows the importance of the family as a fundamental and natural unit of society that benefits from the protection of society and the State, and also the importance of the family in economic and social development throughout the world.

For many centuries, the family has played an important role as a social institution for the consolidation of the social fabric of society during times of peace, war and crises, as well as epidemics or natural disasters. Syria believes that the family is culturally, religiously and historically the core unit of society and for that reason believes that it must be supported and protected.

The family is a top priority for my country, and plans and legislation adopted at the national level are aimed at strengthening the status and position of the Syrian family and at protecting it in the face of modern challenges. We have therefore established an independent governmental body that deals with family affairs, in order to promote the family, such that the family would be better able to participate in human development.

Within the framework of the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, we would like to mention the efforts already made and the ongoing efforts by our Organization in this area. The relevant Syrian body for the family has cooperated with other civil society organizations to heighten awareness of the anniversary year, including an awareness campaign concerning problems of the Syrian family. We have published brochures on the family and have focused in particular, on supporting and protecting issues relating to women and children. The purpose of that campaign is to strengthen and advance the Syrian family.

The challenges facing families in our region are in no way confined to the problems of globalization or insufficiencies in the areas of socio-economic development, as is the case in many developing countries. There are many more problems, because many Arab families are feeling the repercussions of the Israeli occupation of Arab territories. For that reason, we must not forget the conditions and the suffering of families as a result of armed conflicts and foreign occupation, as we celebrate this day.

Therefore, my delegation would like to reaffirm the need for the international community to support all families suffering from foreign occupation, as well as from situations of armed conflict.

Finally, my delegation would like to congratulate Qatar, for having hosted the Doha International Conference for the Family. That was a successful conference — as a regional and international preparatory conference to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family — and was crowned by the adoption of the Doha Declaration, which advances the humanitarian mission of protecting and building families beneficial to society.

Mr. Kazykhanov (Kazakhstan): Allow me, on behalf of the delegation of Kazakhstan, to express appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on preparations for and observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004. The report contains valuable information on the situation of families worldwide that can be used by Governments of Member States in their family policies.

For the last 10 years and since the observance of the International Year of the Family, a lot of attention has been focused on family policies. Throughout the world the family continues to be the primary means for people to live together and to provide mutual nurturing and support. As an integral part of the life of every human being, the family makes an enormous contribution to the eradication of poverty and the creation of just, stable and secure societies.

Fully endorsing the General Assembly's decision to observe the International Year of the Family and other initiatives and longer-term actions to support families around the world, we note the importance of the adopted decisions for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and for the development of societies in general.

It will not be possible to strengthen the family as an institution without results-oriented social policies and the drafting of appropriate national programmes. Family protection constitutes an integral element of Kazakhstan's social policy and seeks to reach the main objective of development — to provide to all people an opportunity to live long lives with dignity.

The dominance of the principle of full solidarity and a high level of State intervention characterize our country's system of social protection. There are 34 types of social payments, benefits and relief provided to different categories of the population from the State and local budgets.

In recognition of the need to develop socially and family-oriented legislation, the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan establishes the concept of the family and the elements of its protection. Those fundamental provisions of the Constitution are further developed in the law on marriage and the family, the law on health protection, the law on education, the law on employment and the law on the reproductive rights of citizens and guarantees of their enjoyment, and in a number of other legislative and regulatory acts that establish and govern family and marriage relations.

State policies in that area cannot be meaningful without guarantees of the child's right to live in a family and develop fully in a friendly environment. In that context, a number of laws on education, the protection of the rights of the child and child health care have been adopted in the country.

The adoption of the law on social, medical and educational help to children with limited abilities has greatly facilitated the efforts to address problems relating to the social protection of children with disabilities.

As an additional measure of social support to the family, a draft law on State benefits to families with children has been prepared. It provides for the introduction of allowances for children from low-income families. It also provides for an increase in the amount of benefits if there are two or more children. An analysis of the legislative acts on issues affecting families, women and children leads to the conclusion that Kazakhstan has established a solid legal foundation to address those issues.

During the years of our independent development, considerable constructive work has been carried out to radically reform the political system and all social and economic relations in the country and to integrate Kazakhstan into the world community. In 1998, by presidential decree, a National Commission on Family and Women was established under the President to coordinate the work of State bodies to protect the rights of women and to strengthen the family as a social institution.

A caucus called "Otybasy" — "family" — composed of 33 deputies was created in the National Parliament, on the initiative of the National Commission, to protect the interests of families, women and children at the legislative level.

To achieve real equality between men and women in all spheres of life, the National Commission has, for the first time ever, elaborated and adopted a Gender Policy Programme in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The establishment of the office of the Human Rights Ombudsman in Kazakhstan has had a positive effect on human rights protection in our country.

When we talk about social security in Kazakhstan, we have to mention the pension system, which occupies a special place in the welfare system. On 1 January 1998, Kazakhstan introduced the system of individual retirement accounts in accumulative pension funds. Today, the indicators for the accumulative pension system reflect a positive trend in the development of the system.

Efforts to improve the situation of disabled persons represent another important track in the country's social policy. Currently, the State provides welfare services to some 400,000 disabled persons, or three per cent of the population, most of whom have limited opportunities to work or to enjoy the same conditions for income generation as other citizens.

Rehabilitation and integration of disabled persons into society take place in accordance with the country's law on social protection of persons with disabilities and the programme for the rehabilitation of disabled persons for 2002-2005, approved by Government decree. The purpose of the programme is to establish a financially viable, efficient and socially just three-pillar system of social security, where responsibility for social security is shared by the State, employers and employees.

We believe that the actions being taken will enable us to increase the income level of the population, which, in turn, will promote further social and economic development in Kazakhstan.

In expressing appreciation to the United Nations for organizing this event, we would like to point out that such meetings give us an opportunity to make a realistic assessment of the progress achieved so far and to identify new ways of addressing issues related to the strengthening of the family as an institution and the improvement of the world social situation.

We hope that the Governments of the United Nations Member States and organizations of the United Nations system will redouble their efforts in the area of the family, for the sake of future generations around the world.

Mrs. Ahmed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, my delegation would like to add its voice to the statement made by the delegation of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

My delegation wishes to express its pleasure at participating in the General Assembly's observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, culminating the numerous activities undertaken over the past decade at all levels aimed at celebrating this important occasion throughout the world. This celebration embodies United Nations endorsement of the norms and precepts accepted since the establishment of the Organization through the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which stipulates that the family is the basic unit of society and, as such, must be accorded support and protection from society and State.

Today's commemoration reiterates the special status accorded to the institution of the family in different societies since humanity began. The family has been cherished by divine religions and noble faiths, given its irreplaceable and natural role in bringing up children and inculcating fundamental sound principles for forthcoming generations so that they may serve as an active and effective nucleus contributing to the building of nations.

We would also like to express our appreciation for the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/59/176, as well as the numerous studies and reports undertaken by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat to commemorate this anniversary. The reports have contributed to raising awareness of family-related matters. The Secretary-General's report emphasizes that the family has a continuous and vital role to play in social and human development. Families still contribute to a great extent to reforming socio-economic conditions and to achieving the goals set out by major United Nations summits and conferences over the past decade, including the Millennium Development Goals.

In this connection, we would like to state that, while supporting and promoting the role of families, Governments must provide assistance to men and women so that they can reconcile productive work and family responsibilities in the light of contemporary conditions. Along the same lines, we support the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General, particularly those recommendations that relate to spurring scholarly and academic research to conduct studies on the influential social factors affecting the family and its role in society in integrating family affairs into the development process, in fostering international cooperation, and in extending technical assistance to the relevant national machinery.

At the national level and in observance of this occasion, the Minister for Social Affairs of Sudan issued a resolution last year to set up a commission to prepare for the tenth anniversary consisting of official institutions, academic institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The commission's task is to prepare for the celebrations and to achieve four main objectives. The first objective is the elaboration of national family policies. The second is the protection of the family from the repercussions of globalization. The third is to build a family-related database. And the fourth is to empower the family and enhance its role.

A celebration took place on 4 and 5 December with the theme of "Stable and Effective Family in a Changing World". This event was implemented at the federal level; programmes and goals of the tenth anniversary have also been implemented at the level of the provinces, with the participation of various parties, official bodies and civil society organizations.

In this regard, Sudan participated with representatives and NGOs at an Arab meeting held in October 2003 in Lebanon and a regional conference on family held in Cotonou, in July 2004.

It also participated in the Arab regional meeting on the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in Jordan in October 2004 and the Doha International Conference for the Family, held on 29 and 30 November 2004, which adopted the Doha Declaration, which in turn constitutes an important turning point in charting family-related policies and strategies in the framework of the United Nations and through the exchange by States of experience and expertise in that connection. For those reasons, we would like to express our appreciation to the Government of Qatar for hosting that important Conference.

In conclusion, my delegation is of the view that the impetus generated today by this celebration will help pave the way for the implementation of the goals of the International Year of the Family in the field. We should build on this momentum in preparing for the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in a manner that reaffirms the role of the family in the socio-economic development of all societies, especially in the developing countries.

Mr. Horn (United States of America): I wish at the outset to express my gratitude for the privilege of addressing this body today. It is indeed an honour.

Ten years ago, the General Assembly proclaimed the International Year of the Family. In celebration of this tenth anniversary, I should like to spend my time this morning providing an overview of how Americans view the role of the State in relationship to the family and how those principles guide family policy in the United States.

The United States Census Bureau defines a family as "two or more persons related by birth, marriage or adoption who reside in the same household". Of course, this definition cannot begin to capture the richness of family life, for family life is really about things such as celebrating anniversaries, caring for an elderly parent and tucking one's children into bed at night.

Still, discussing family life is not simply an appeal to sentiment. Throughout the ages, political philosophers, social historians and civic and religious leaders have praised the family as the foundation of the social order, the bedrock of nations and the bastion of civilization.

Cicero, for example, spoke of the family as the first society and the seabed of the State. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights describes the family as "the natural and fundamental group unit of society". The fact is that the family is a universal and irreplaceable community rooted in human nature and the basis of all societies at all times. As the cradle of life and love for each new generation, the family is the primary source of personal identity, self-esteem and support for children. It is also the first and foremost school of life, uniquely suited to teaching children integrity, character, morals, responsibility, service and wisdom.

As the 1994 United Nations Programme for the International Year of the Family states, the family provides "the natural framework for the emotional, financial and material support essential to the growth and development of their members" (*A/CONF.171/4, para. 67*), particularly infants and children. The family remains a vital means of preserving and transmitting cultural values.

These roles of transmitting culture and socializing children make the family indispensable to civil society as families transform helpless, dependent babies into responsible, independent adults. Thus it is easy to understand why President George W. Bush has said that the character of a nation begins in the home.

Given the importance of families to society, does the State have any role in supporting the family? We believe that the answer is "yes". We believe that government, within appropriate limits, should work to support and strengthen families by respecting the prerogatives of families, encouraging healthy marriages and supporting all families that need assistance.

To support families effectively, however, government must first recognize that families exist apart from the State. The United States Declaration of Independence states that all human beings are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights — in other words, rights that predate the State. The State must recognize and acknowledge those rights and respect the family for what it is as a matter of natural law. The State's foremost obligation, therefore, is to respect, defend and protect the family as an institution. As President Bush has said, government must honour the family.

Given that understanding of the relationship between the State and the family, what, then, are the principles that should guide family policy in America?

First, we believe that government ought to create the conditions that allow strong and healthy families to thrive. Consistent with paragraph 1 of article 25 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights that "Everyone has a right to a standard of living for the health and well-being of himself and of his family", we believe that government ought to keep the tax burden on families as low as possible. We also believe that government ought to create the conditions whereby it is not necessary for both parents to be in the paid labour force in order to provide an adequate household income. Although government policy should remain neutral as to whether two parents or only one are in the workplace, and, if the latter, which parent works outside the home, government policy, we believe, should be aimed at providing parents the option to split their roles and functions in the family, if they so choose.

Secondly, we believe that Government should recognize the unique and irreplaceable contributions of both mothers and fathers to the lives of their children. Research has shown that mothers and fathers on average tend to parent differently in some important ways, offering their children unique skills and gifts. Thus American family policy seeks to strengthen the bond connecting fathers to their children while also supporting the role of motherhood as an esteemed and respected institution in society.

Thirdly, we believe that public policy ought to strengthen healthy marriages, and, where possible, the two-parent family. Research consistently shows that healthy marriages benefit children, adults and society, whereas dysfunctional marriages do not. Hence in America government seeks to promote healthy marriages, not marriage at any cost.

Fourthly, we believe that government policy should recognize that every child has dignity and worth and, as such, ought to support all children and families. Even if government policy does what it can to strengthen healthy marriages, some children will grow up in other situations. Research indicates that those children tend to face increased risks for negative outcomes. The State should therefore offer a variety of tangible social services to families in need, including cash assistance, food assistance and health care, to help ensure that all families have a minimum standard of living.

While providing a safety net for vulnerable families and children is unquestionably important, there are limits to government intervention. Social services cannot replace the natural human relationships that are ideal for children's development. Social services can only supplement what children need most: the love and attention of their mother and father.

During his first year in office, President Bush highlighted his commitment to the family when he said:

> "My Administration is committed to strengthening the American family. Many one-parent families are also a source of comfort and reassurance. Yet a family with a mom and a dad who are committed to marriage and devote themselves to their children helps provide children a sound foundation for success. Government can support families by promoting policies that help strengthen the institution of marriage and help parents rear their children in positive and healthy environments."

Government policy is limited in what it can do to strengthen families. But what it can do, it ought to do.

As we move beyond this year's tenth anniversary celebrations, Governments ought to honour and support the family as the most critical structure for ensuring the well-being of children, who are, after all, our future.

Mrs. Wahab (Indonesia): On behalf of the delegation of Indonesia, let me thank the Secretary-General for his detailed report on preparations for and observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family (A/59/176), which is now being discussed at this plenary meeting. It is a rich document that allows us to assess national priorities and actions to protect and strengthen families.

I take this opportunity to associate my delegation with the statements made by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the representative of Brunei Darussalam on behalf of the Association of South-East Asian Nations.

The advice contained in the Secretary-General's report that each country should determine for itself the way in which major trends affect its particular circumstances is acceptable to Indonesia. We also welcome the light the report sheds on approaches and policies undertaken to deal with dysfunctional situations affecting all types of families. In essence, Indonesia regards the report as an important record of steps taken so far and as a statement on what needs to be done to secure the future of families.

For its part, Indonesia remains committed to the ideals of the International Year of the Family because we recognize that the family is at the very centre of human existence. Strong families not only contribute to the good order of society but also represent an untapped contributor to society's economic and social development. To play the diverse roles of which it is capable, the family must therefore benefit from the widest possible protection and assistance to build its capacity for action.

Without such support, family life would risk disintegration, and there is clear evidence that the result would most probably be various forms of anti-social behaviour. Dysfunctional families put communities under stress and place great strain on the social infrastructure of nations. Indonesia believes that such a negative social situation is to be avoided at all costs. Consequently, Indonesia's national ideal is a well-integrated, prosperous family, and towards that end Indonesia has placed the family at the centre of its policy-making process.

As the family is the fundamental unit of society, Indonesia believes that the purpose of national policies and programmes for families should result in individual and group empowerment. Because women have historically had to cope with innumerable constraints, special emphasis is being given to their development. Since they also represent the nucleus of family life, it is vital that they be equipped to handle the important responsibilities that underlie successful family life.

Indonesia has therefore put into effect a policy — "Quality, Community and Family 2015" — that aims to build family resilience and enhance the capacity of women to respond effectively to the basic needs of their families. Through that policy women are gaining the means to help provide their families with food, health care, education and shelter and are now themselves the beneficiaries of increased educational opportunities.

The close attention being paid to women does not mean, however, that men have been overlooked. The broad-based nature of the national programme of action also impacts men. They are being mobilized and encouraged to become more involved in building strong, happy, prosperous families, since the success of the family does not depend only on the efforts and inputs of women. In addition to satisfying the basic material needs of the family, men also have an important role to play in meeting the intellectual, emotional and spiritual needs of their offspring.

The partnership of husband and wife must address not only the functions of reproduction and production, but also incorporate the critically important function of socialization. Proper child-rearing and the creation of conditions for the wholesome development of children must be treated as shared responsibilities.

Together, the husband and wife team must create a happy, loving, nurturing home environment for their children. Together, they must create the value system that will give their children a strong religious and moral education and guide their actions in the wider society. Those values should inspire confidence and boldness but should not create an orientation for domestic violence.

On the whole, Indonesia has made notable progress in improving the quality of life enjoyed by its families. But we recognize there must be a permanent commitment at the highest level of government to the goals of the International Year of the Family in order to maintain a high quality of life and to improve it in the future. We shall therefore continue to build strong partnerships and cooperate with all relevant parties, regionally and internationally, to ensure better conditions of life for families. In that regard, we warmly welcome the convening of the Doha International Conference for the Family and its Doha Declaration.

Mr. Briz Gutiérrez (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made by Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

For Guatemala, the family is the basic unit of society and as such should receive the greatest protection, assistance and support in any social and cultural policy. For the family is the nucleus within which the development of the human being — the owner of the future — takes place.

Guatemala's presence at this important meeting shows the commitment of the Government to the family as the natural and necessary instrument for bringing forth and nurturing human life. The Constitution of the Republic establishes the protection and promotion of the family and the State guarantees that obligation and further declares that it is in the interest of society to take action against the causes of family disintegration.

As a result of commitments assumed at the World Summit for Children and of our ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Guatemala established a programme of community homes, under the First Lady's Secretariat of Social Work. This programme is a Government strategy to contribute to the fight against poverty, to prevent and minimize the problem posed by street children and to provide protection and assistance to abandoned or destitute children.

It cannot be denied that in all parts of the world, changes in the structure of the family have accelerated over the past decade. However, as the primary and central component of society, the family nevertheless continues to be the centre of every activity of the human being, both privately and in the social sphere. For that reason, its protection, proper functioning and well-being are of concern to society as a whole.

We agree with the Secretary-General that in the integration of matters concerning the family, the State plays the principal role. It is the entity called upon to implement important domestic policies and programmes that protect the family and advance its organization on the basis of an institution that tends towards equality of rights and obligations of the couple, responsible parenthood and mutual assistance within the home.

For many years, Guatemala has undertaken a variety of scattered, albeit urgent efforts to tackle the various social phenomena that adversely affect our families and our population as a whole. We note with concern that despite those efforts, there are still families that struggle daily to obtain food and dignified and adequately paid employment. There are other economic and cultural factors that are detrimental to the development of the human being.

There are many challenges that today's family faces, including the exploitation of children, inadequate education for children, drug addiction and alcoholism, the devastating effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, infectious diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis, armed conflicts, natural disasters and extreme weather conditions — to mention some of the more alarming factors. A global response is required to tackle those problems. Therefore, it is important to strengthen cooperation with and provide technical assistance to Governments so that they can enhance their national capacities, whether through non-governmental organizations or through the United Nations system, within the framework of commitments made at the various conferences and under international instruments.

With respect to the legal framework, Guatemala needs to continue to integrate family perspectives into its development process and to strengthen domestic mechanisms for coordinating policies and programmes, taking into account the multilingual, multicultural and multi-ethnic character of our country. We must therefore recognize, respect and promote lifestyles, customs, traditions, modes of social organization and other components of the identity and the worldview of each social group.

Guatemala strongly supports regional efforts to assist families, including the exchange of specialized information and experience concerning family issues and the dissemination of information. It supports the creation of networks at the subregional, regional and inter-regional levels that promote concern for the family, taking into account the cultural, environmental, social and economic conditions of each country.

With respect to the multilateral level, my delegation wishes to express its support for efforts to strengthen the machinery of the United Nations in order to promote and build capacity and to provide technical assistance on family issues to Governments that request it.

Ms. Aranda (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for my delegation to participate in this meeting of the General Assembly devoted to the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family. Mexico welcomes the various activities undertaken by the United Nations to achieve the objectives of the Year and those planned for this important commemoration. We thank the Secretary-General for his substantive and comprehensive report (A/59/176). We agree that it is necessary for the United Nations to play a catalysing role and support the strengthening of the family in planning at the national, regional and global levels.

I shall refer to Mexico's national development plan, which demonstrates the central role of the family in the humanist Government led by President Fox. The social transition in Mexico requires a policy that strengthens families and enables them to plan for the future, educate their children and enjoy the sharing of life that takes place within the family.

On the basis of that document, and taking into account the appeal by the Secretary-General, the Mexican Government has carried out a process of thorough reflection that resulted in the creation of an inter-institutional board, for which more than 72 public and private institutions have formed a preparatory technical committee to study the Mexican family. As a result of those efforts, we have already reviewed the civil law codes of the federal Government and the 32 states comprising the Republic. That review has revealed inconsistencies of family law in the country.

Collected research on the family over the past decade has enabled us to study and geographically pinpoint quantitative data. An examination of existing public policy has shown that we do not have a public policy on family issues. The first results of the survey on family dynamics, which will be completed in March 2005, will give us a more thorough knowledge of qualitative aspects. That study involves 24,000 households and is the most ambitious of its kind. It encompasses three generations in each family and 3,600 life trajectories and provides a network diagram and a lexicon.

It should be noted that thorough study has not meant inaction. We are already elaborating a proposal. The Institute for Legal Research at the National Autonomous University of Mexico is developing a model code to harmonize family law and the Ministry of Labour has proposed initiatives to reconcile work life and family life. The Ministry of Health has issued a family health record book. The Ministry of Education has completed a national model of family education, as well as a national system for the comprehensive development of the family, which is aimed at developing the skills of family members to promote their integral development, thus building a life free of violence.

Our institution acts as a coordinator of this important effort and is being staffed with professional-level employees so that it can guide public policy concerning the family and the community. To that end, all programmes are being reviewed to ensure that they comply with the goal of supporting and strengthening tasks for which the family is irreplaceable, such as generational equality, cultural transmission, socialization, responsibility and pro-sociality.

It should be pointed out that in Mexico, 92.9 per cent of households are composed of families and 89 per cent of Mexicans today consider their family to be the most important thing in their lives. That has been shown by numerous studies that also show that this belief has been gaining force over the past decade.

It is no secret that the vulnerability suffered by our peoples — insecurity, crime, abuse, abandonment of the elderly, orphaned children and violence — causes enormous imbalances and obliges us to spend millions on institutional policies that in the end can do no more than manage those ills. If we go on like this, a time when will come when all our tax resources will not suffice to counter the effects of vulnerability. If we wish to address the causes, we must look at the family, not only to analyse its weaknesses, which, unfortunately, are many, but also to promote its strengths. When the family stops being a loving environment, social ills are generated. However, if we work to strengthen the family, we will have an important ally of the State that promotes the full enjoyment of the rights of each family member.

Mexico believes that creating public policies with a family and community perspective does not mean imposing a specific model. It requires recognizing the various family structures and giving them a boost in an act of commitment and solidarity in order to make the family functional. In doing so, the State must not fail to carry out its commitments and implement specific policies for individuals that do not have family ties. Strengthening protective factors reduces risk factors. Backed by our research, we firmly believe that the family is a valid and vital institution that will continue to be the fundamental institution of civilization, the great generator of social capital and thus the key strength of Mexico and the world.

We believe it important to renew the validity of and respect for the international commitments that States have made in the area of the protection of the family and its members in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the principle human rights instruments and the outcomes of the World Summit for Social Development, the International Conference on Population and Development and the special session of the General Assembly on children.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): The family is the natural and fundamental unit of society. That has been so since time immemorial. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes that. It remains as valid now as when the Declaration was adopted.

We thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/59/176), as well as for his presence and his remarks this morning.

Values and cultures are not static. They change with time. They differ from place to place. They vary with ethnic origins and religious affiliations. But despite these differences, one element remains constant: it is the belief that the family is society's core component.

For most of us, the term family implies husband and wife and their children. This is the nuclear family. In some societies, it includes close relatives and constitutes the basic economic, social and civic unit. Governments and civil society do well to recognize that central fact. All our economic and social programmes must also bear that in mind. The attainment of every Millennium Development Goal must begin with the family. The family is the main instrument of societal transformation.

A very good example of this is how and why the family, indeed the women in the family, is the focus of Bangladesh's microcredit programmes. These have contributed so significantly to poverty alleviation in our country that they have become models worthy of emulation in countries and societies of comparable milieu.

In Bangladesh, a Government ministry is dedicated to social and family welfare. It works hand in hand with non-governmental organizations and civil society. We believe that marriage between a man and a woman is the linchpin that binds and bonds the family together.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family. We applaud the Government of the State of Qatar for hosting the recent Doha International Conference for the Family. We also thank the Consort of the Emir, Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Misnad, for her keen interest and contribution. The outcome of the meeting reiterates international commitments towards efforts to strengthen the family.

The family also helps not only to bring up children but to protect their rights. It provides them basic health care and education. It teaches them the need to avoid social evils. Today's children are tomorrow's citizens. The family is, as it always has been, the best school for the promotion of civic culture. That is why we must do our best to support the family and that is why my delegation wholeheartedly endorses the Doha Declaration and the draft resolution now before the Assembly (A/59/L.29).

It is our hope that this tenth anniversary celebration of the International Year of the Family will further motivate us towards promoting and strengthening our efforts on issues pertaining to the family at the United Nations and beyond. We must adopt every effective measure and take every possible step to protect, sustain, support and promote the family in times of peace and war.

Mr. Moon Seoung-hyun (Republic of Korea): It is my great honour to speak on behalf of the Korean delegation, as we gather today to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

Ten years ago, the international community came together to underscore the importance of the family for social and human development, pledging support for strengthening family policy and enhancing support to families. Since that time, significant progress has been made in each of those areas, but much work still remains to be done, as the Secretary-General's report (A/59/176) makes clear.

We are pleased to note that over the past decade, notable progress has been made in improving the living conditions and in strengthening the social stability and security of the family. Many countries have enacted new laws or amended laws so as to provide direct benefits to families, and both central and local Governments have established policies or services that target families as beneficiaries.

The Republic of Korea is no exception. My Government has implemented several measures to support family self-sufficiency and promote a caring environment within the family. We are currently in the process of revising our family law to fully obtain gender equality and individual rights in the family structure. Throughout all these processes, the International Year of the Family has guided us by enhancing public awareness of family issues within our society.

We commend the efforts of the United Nations Programme on the Family in organizing a range of initiatives to observe the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family. Numerous conferences and events have been held throughout this year to raise awareness of family issues and to give impetus to policy makers to incorporate family issues into national development policy. Other activities, such as the study of the impact of HIV/AIDS on the family and publications of family indicators, have also been important.

As noted in the Secretary-General's report, newly emerging social trends, such as changes in family structure, demographic ageing, migration and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, are having profound effects on families throughout the world. Moreover, in a country like the Republic of Korea, which underwent a rapid modernization process followed by major social changes, the challenges have been daunting. Among other things, low fertility rates and demographic ageing are likely to have a serious impact on our society in the future, and we are currently searching for ways to tackle those issues. Furthermore, as our own example clearly reveals, family policy cannot be separated from other aspects of social policy. Accordingly, an integrated family policy is needed to effectively complement existing sectoral policies.

The tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family comes at an important time in United Nations history. Next year, we will gather to review progress in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The observance of the International Year of the Family has served to highlight the essential role families play in the development process and has underscored the need to further mainstream family issues into national development plans and programmes. The Republic of Korea believes that if we are truly committed to realizing the MDGs, it must be recognized that family policy and social policy are often one and the same.

In closing, I would like to express our hope that today's gathering will provide an opportunity to reaffirm the commitments on the family made 10 years ago and to identify further actions. If we can build upon our accomplishments and focus on the common ground that we all share, I am certain that the remaining goals of the International Year of the Family will soon be achieved.

Mr. Maurer (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland attaches great importance to issues concerning the family, and we welcome the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family. Switzerland would like to highlight — as the Secretary-General did in his introductory statement — that the family is the basic unit in society and that, in different political, social and economic systems, the family takes on different forms.

Switzerland takes this opportunity to reaffirm the commitments undertaken at the summits in Copenhagen and Geneva in 2000, at the Peking and Peking + 5 summits, at the Cairo and Cairo + 5 summits, at the special session on children and in the context of other United Nations conferences and summits. Switzerland also underscores the importance of legal human rights obligations, in particular as contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Switzerland considers that these commitments constitute the political and legal framework for all action concerning the family in its various forms.

International standards exist. The real challenge is implementation. The international community's action must therefore focus on implementing its commitments. In that respect, Switzerland underlines the importance of the participation of all stakeholders in this area at the local, national and international levels.

In its various resolutions on the family, the General Assembly has stipulated that the main activities organized to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family should take place essentially at the local, national and regional levels. The Swiss Government, in collaboration with Pro Familia, an umbrella non-governmental organization active in the area of family policy in Switzerland, has organized a number of activities to commemorate the occasion.

Moreover, Switzerland is committed to drafting a report every five years on the situation of the family. The first report, which examines the structures of family policy at the federal, canton and community levels, has been completed for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the Observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Migliore (Holy See) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is delighted to take the floor at the conclusion of the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family. Further, this commemoration is taking place at the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly, which is now considering two priorities of the world today: security and development.

Our debates and programmes are focused on the concept of security in the broad sense of the term, encompassing what, in United Nations parlance, are called direct threats, such as terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, and secondary threats, such as unemployment, poverty, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the exploitation of children and women and limited access to housing, healthcare facilities, education and medicines, which all affect human society as a whole in daily life.

Given that the predicted indices of poverty and inequality, which continue to worsen in many countries, are far from encouraging, it is no surprise that reducing poverty is now a top priority on the development agenda. In that context, my delegation expresses its support for the family, which is the basic unit of society by nature and as a result of the vital contribution it is called upon to make in ensuring security and development.

The family, more specifically, the lasting and stable union between a man and a woman, seems the most natural and the most suitable way to ensure procreation and, consequently, the renewal of the generations. Economic growth requires a minimum of demographic growth, achieved through reproduction, which ensures that past generations are replaced. Beyond such demographic considerations, we should recall that it is within that primary natural community of the family that individuals acquire a number of qualities, areas of knowledge and attitudes that enable them one day to be productive and thus constructive creators of society. It is not simply a question of bringing children into the world but of rearing them well. The economic concept of human capital is especially relevant here. As the primary place where human capital is shaped, the family is truly indispensable to development. It is therefore important to make available all the tools necessary to ensure just recognition of the fact that the family is not simply the centre of consumption but also where genuine wealth is created. That fact is not fully appreciated today.

However, there can be no action in favour of families without first creating the real political will to promote a model. In particular, the expression "the basic unit of society" refers to the precise concept of social order based on the existence of stable communities of people. That concept should be found and recognized at all institutional levels.

Thus, family policy should provide the general framework for taking measures in response to the economic and social challenges of our time. Recognizing the necessity of promoting the family, conceived as a preventive policy, should not mean State interference in the family. No new social rights need be invented. Rather, conditions for justice should be created.

In addition, family policy must be clearly distinguished from social policy. Indeed, social policy suggests assistance aimed at mitigating the gravity of a situation: first reducing its negative effects and then ensuring emergence from a situation judged to be bad. Family policy, on the other hand, should permit sustainable economic development. The goal could never be to abolish the family.

Finally, family policy should be a full-fledged policy. First, it has its objectives: to promote a model — at the very least, not penalizing those wishing to have children. It has its means: fair compensation for expenses connected with education, and genuine recognition of the value of domestic work. Finally, it has its goals: lasting action founded on the criteria of justice and effectiveness, because the family is an investment for tomorrow. Only a real awareness of the importance of those various elements will enable us to implement family policy effectively.

My delegation notes with satisfaction actions in connection with this anniversary taken by various countries, in particular Benin and Qatar.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/59/L.29, as orally revised. In that connection, I would like to invite the representative of Qatar to take the floor.

Mr. Al-Bader (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Group of 77 and China is introducing draft resolution A/59/L.29 on celebrating the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, which reflects the will of Member States to respect the family and to demonstrate the importance that we attach to supporting and protecting it.

In resolutions 56/113, 57/164 and 58/15, the General Assembly addressed the question of preparations for and observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and decided on actions to implement its goals. The present draft resolution commends all Governments, non-governmental organizations and civil society for hosting conferences and events as part of the observation. It also calls upon the United Nations bodies and agencies to promote family-oriented policies. The tenth anniversary has been successful. Now, at the end of the year, we can see that the support of the international community was productive in supporting and protecting the family. Thus, it is important to welcome such success.

The Group of 77 and China sponsored the draft resolution and endeavoured to frame a text that reflected consensus. We welcome the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and recognize the excellent achievements to date. After consultations, we took into account the concerns and constructive proposals of other delegations, particularly with regard to ensuring that the principle underlying the draft resolution was not impaired. However, we needed to be flexible. Accordingly, we have made some revisions to the draft so as to take account of the objections raised by some delegations.

After consultations earlier today, we deleted the third, fourth and fifth preambular paragraphs. In the operative part, paragraphs 4 and 5 have been replaced by a single paragraph that reads as follows:

(*spoke in English*)

> "Welcomes the hosting of the regional conference on the family in Africa from 27 to 28 July 2004 by the Government of Benin, and also welcomes the hosting of the Doha International Conference for the Family from

29 to 30 November 2004 by the State of Qatar, and takes note of their outcome;".

(*spoke in Arabic*)

Those are the revisions. We ask that all members support and protect the family by supporting the draft resolution.

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote before action is taken on the draft resolution, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Hof (Netherlands): I am speaking on behalf of the European Union. The European Union reaffirms its full support for the implementation of the declarations and programmes of action of the Copenhagen Summit, the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Conference, as well as the outcome of the special session on children. We remain convinced that the objectives set forth in the context of those international forums provide a framework for the protection of families as a key element in forging stronger and more coherent models for development throughout the world.

The European Union is deeply committed to family-related issues. As far back as 1989, the European Commission published its first communiqué on family policies. That was followed by important actions such as the 1996 directive on parental leave. Some major areas of attention are reconciling family and work life and improving the living conditions of vulnerable families. The first joint report singled out eight core challenges, ranging from preserving family solidarity to protecting the rights of children by finding new forms of support for the family as a way to prevent poverty and social exclusion, and to promote equality between men and women.

The importance that the European Union attaches to the role of families is exemplified by the Conference on Families, Change and Social Policy in Europe, organized by the Irish presidency of the European Union, which took place in May 2004. The Conference of the European Ministers for Family Affairs will take place in December in Berlin, at the invitation of the German Government.

The concept and composition of families has changed over the course of time, illustrating the fact that the family is a living, dynamic entity. For instance, within the European Union there has been a substantial increase in the number of single-person households. In celebrating the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, the European Union reaffirms its commitment to such ideals and reiterates its support for cohesive policies carried out at the local and international levels, enhancing the condition of families throughout the world and embracing social inclusion as a means to eradicate poverty and discrimination.

The European Union welcomes discussions in the United Nations on issues related to families. We should take the commitments of the Copenhagen, Cairo, Beijing, Madrid and other relevant United Nations summits fully into account. Rather than focusing on ideologies, the debate should focus on the implementation of agreed commitments and their consequences for families and their individual members. National and international policies should also address the needs and rights of all individual family members, in particular women and children.

The European Union therefore regrets that a sponsor of the draft resolution on celebrating the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, as contained in document A/59/L.29, has not been willing to address the concerns of the European Union and other delegations. The European Union supports draft resolution A/C.3/59/L.2, entitled "Celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond", which the Third Committee adopted by consensus. The European Union believes that that text reflects the international consensus that exists with regard to issues relating to the International Year of the Family.

Unfortunately, the sponsors have brought non-consensual elements to draft resolution A/59/L.29, and we regret that we are therefore unable to support it. The European Union will disassociate itself from the text of the draft resolution to be adopted. We hope and trust that future initiatives on the International Year of the Family or on family issues in general will build upon the traditional international consensus. The European Union requests this statement to be fully reflected in the records.

The Acting President: Due note will be taken of the statement of the representative of the Netherlands.

We have heard the only speaker in explanation of vote.

Before proceeding to take action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that since the introduction of draft resolution A/59/L.29, Armenia, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation have joined the list of sponsors.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/59/L.29, as orally revised.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/59/L.29, as orally revised?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/111).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Nornberg (Norway): I would like to take this opportunity to explain Norway's position on the resolution just adopted.

Norway places great emphasis on questions relating to, and the role of, families in society. We regard the following to be key consensus documents for policies and actions relating to the family in all its various forms: the outcome documents of the World Summit for Social Development, held at Copenhagen, and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly; of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held at Beijing, and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (Beijing+5); and of the International Conference on Population and Development, held at Cairo, and the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly. Moreover, we continue to stand firmly committed to basic international human rights instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child as fundamental parts of the framework for policies and actions relating to families.

In the light of those sets of basic international political and legal commitments, it is Norway's view that today we should focus, first and foremost, on entering an era of implementing commitments previously made. The development of new declarations and outcome documents in a non-United Nations context and with a selective focus on some of the various forms of the family that exist could, in our view, prove counterproductive in that regard. Bearing that in mind, we feel compelled today to dissociate ourselves from the consensus on the resolution just adopted.

Ms. Groux (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland, which attaches great importance to family-related issues, did not want to oppose the consensus adoption of draft resolution A/59/L.29. However, like other delegations, my delegation dissociates itself from the consensus.

As we stated this morning, Switzerland echoes the Secretary-General's introductory statement in emphasizing that the family is the basic unit of society and that, depending on the cultural, social and political system concerned, the family takes various forms. Switzerland also takes the opportunity of today's observance to reaffirm the commitments made at the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, at the Fourth World Conference on Women and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, at the International Conference on Population and Development, at the special session of the General Assembly on children and in the context of other United Nations summits and conferences. Switzerland has also noted the importance of legal commitments undertaken in the context of legal instruments related to human rights, particularly the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Switzerland believes that those commitments are the political and legal frameworks for all actions related to the family in all its forms.

We must note that international standards are not lacking today and that the real challenge lies in their implementation. The action of the international community must therefore focus on the implementation of those commitments. We congratulate the Governments of Benin and Qatar on their contributions to the observance of today's anniversary. However, while taking note of the results of these conferences, Switzerland does not endorse their contents.

Mr. Adsett (Canada): Canada joins other delegations in dissociating itself from the consensus on draft resolution A/59/L.29. Canada attaches great importance to the family and to family-related issues. Although we support the aim of that text, we are concerned by what is not in the text. In particular, we believe that it is important to recognize that, in different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist. That reality has been recognized on numerous occasions in the past, including the Fourth World Conference on Women, held at Beijing, the World Summit for Social Development, held at Copenhagen, and the special session of the General Assembly on children, held two years ago. We regret that a sponsor has not been willing to address the concerns of Canada and other delegations in that regard, and we therefore join other delegations in dissociating ourselves from the consensus on the text.

Mr. Choi (Australia): Australia fully supports the comments made by the delegations of Norway, Switzerland and Canada, and we wish to dissociate ourselves from the consensus on this resolution.

Ms. Hauksdóttir (Iceland): My delegation would like to second the views already expressed by the representatives of the European Union and Norway and by others and to align ourselves with the statements made by previous speakers dissociating them from the consensus on draft resolution A/59/L.29.

Mr. Schurti (Liechtenstein): My delegation also takes the floor in explanation of position and endorses what was said by the representative of the European Union and by other previous speakers.

Liechtenstein is committed to implementing existing instruments with regard to the well-being of families, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and special sessions of the General Assembly held during the past decade. My delegation regrets that some non-consensus elements were included in the draft resolution just adopted. We found the negotiation process to be flawed and non-inclusive. Liechtenstein therefore dissociates itself from the consensus on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. MacKay (New Zealand): New Zealand has been an active participant in United Nations debates on the family, without exception, and we have joined consensus on family resolutions in the past. We believe that families are the fundamental building blocks of our communities, our societies and our nations. We must support them, and we must commit ourselves to recognizing the family as a source of strength, belonging and cohesion.

More than most countries, we have been prepared to back up our words with action. In the course of the past year, New Zealand has announced two major initiatives to support the family. Together, those initiatives represent the most significant advances in decades in support of the family and in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child in New Zealand.

First, New Zealand has established a Commission for the Family to advocate for the family within Government and in the community. Secondly, New Zealand has announced governmental financial assistance for families, entitled the "working for families package". It will deliver additional per-week income to low- and middle-income families with dependent children throughout our country.

New Zealand's commitment to the family is indisputable. We are therefore disappointed that our views during the negotiations on this resolution and others like it, and the efforts of those countries that have voiced concerns similar to ours, have been misrepresented as anti-family. Let me therefore take the time to be clear about the difficulties that we have with elements of this resolution.

New Zealand is increasingly concerned that the debate on the family is becoming a vehicle for attacking long-standing consensus agreements on tolerance of family diversity and on the rights of women and children. We are concerned, for example, that the Doha Declaration omits a long-standing agreed reference to the fact that many forms of the family exist and that it contains no reference to the rights of women and children. The Declaration should have acknowledged that the rights of individuals within families should also be protected and that individuals have the right to leave family environments in which their well-being is at risk.

Given that the Doha Declaration is inconsistent with United Nations agreements reached at Cairo, Beijing and Copenhagen, we are concerned that it has been noted in this resolution. It is particularly unusual for this Assembly to note documents that were produced by conferences to which not all Governments were invited.

Many forms of the family exist. That is the reality, and we cannot ignore it. In New Zealand, our families are increasingly diverse, reflecting the diversity of our people's cultures and circumstances, and indeed the Secretary-General himself in this Assembly this morning referred to the increasing diversity of families. We therefore regret that this text and the Doha Declaration together promote only one model of the family at the expense of others, and in so doing, they ignore a long-standing consensus on such matters.

New Zealand is, therefore, like others who have spoken, compelled to disassociate itself from the consensus on this particular resolution.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the vote. Three delegations have indicated their wish to make general statements after the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. Adechi (Benin) (*spoke in French*): Benin sets great store by issues related to the family. We would like especially to hail the efforts made by the international community during the decade to support the family.

We would have liked to have greater support for the resolution that we have just adopted for celebrating the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family. We see, therefore, that there is still some work that needs to be done, and we have hope that all delegations will be able to reach a broader consensus than the one we have attained.

In the meantime, we will have to implement the existing text, on which the entire international community agrees. It is with this is mind that the Cotonou Conference acted such that the drafting and adopting of the plan of action to be adopted there would, to the extent possible, rally the greatest consensus possible.

Therefore, we must consider, within the international community, the important issue of the implementation of the gains made during the International Year of the Family, and I am referring specifically to the Plan of Action on the Family in Africa. We hope we can count on the support of the entire international community for the implementation of that Plan of Action.

Mr. Cumberbach Miguén (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): In joining in the support given to the draft resolution submitted by Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77, the delegation of Cuba would like to welcome the adoption of a resolution that is designed to draw attention to events that the Chairman of our Group and the delegation of Benin have conducted to promote the well-being of families in all their forms.

This is not the first time that the General Assembly takes note of accomplishments resulting from an event that took place somewhere, whether the event be a part of the United Nations or not.

None of the main sponsors of the text claims to set themselves up as the greatest world promoter of topics of protection and assistance to the family. This is a single text designed to draw attention to activities that are to be carried out and that could serve as a framework for a better exchange of views on such an important topic, and would contribute to creating a greater atmosphere of cooperation among various cultures, rather than a confrontation between them.

Mr. Al-Bader (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to thank the delegations for their great support for this draft resolution. There is no doubt that the adoption of this resolution demonstrates the determination of Member States to honour their commitments to families. This reflects the importance we attach to supporting and protecting families. This is an important testimony to the success of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family. This is a successful crowning of the many activities and events that took place throughout the world for the family.

The General Assembly should provide a follow-up to these very important issues, and it is incumbent upon us to implement the goals of the International Year of the Family by ensuring an effective follow-up to these activities.

We must also talk about the positive results of the meetings in Benin and Doha. The General Assembly has in the past noted with satisfaction certain activities. I think it would be appropriate here to express our satisfaction with these concrete results, especially in the light of resolution 57/190 that was adopted by the General Assembly, and the Yokohama Global Commitment 2001 adopted by the second World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.

The General Assembly in its resolution 55/79 addressed the issue of children in armed conflict, and it expressed satisfaction with the positive results of the International Conference on War-Affected Children, which was held in Winnipeg, Canada, in 2000.

There are also other gains that have been made at other conferences. So Doha is not an exception. That is why I would like to thank very sincerely all delegations that sponsored and supported this draft resolution.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this meeting devoted to the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and this stage of its consideration of agenda item 94.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.

United Nations A/59/PV.68

General Assembly

Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

68th plenary meeting

Wednesday, 8 December 2004, 11.30 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ping .... (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 11.40 a.m.

Agenda item 55 (*continued*)

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565 and A/59/565/Corr.1)

The President (*spoke in French*): Members will recall that the General Assembly held its debate on this agenda item together with agenda item 45 at the 58th to 60th plenary meetings, on 22 and 23 November 2004.

Before proceeding further, I would like to inform members that immediately following the adjournment of this meeting, there will be an informal meeting of the Assembly on the report of the High-level Panel.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan.

The Secretary-General: Members of the General Assembly received last week the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, entitled "A more secure world: our shared responsibility". I think it is an excellent report. It provides a new and comprehensive vision of collective security for the twenty-first century. One of its key messages is this: because of globalization, we live in a world of interconnected threats and mutual vulnerability between rich and poor, and weak and strong. No country can afford to deal with today's threats alone, and no threat can be dealt with effectively unless other threats are addressed at the same time.

To do this, we need global policies and global institutions that are efficient and effective. The United Nations has done a good job in many instances and is often undervalued. But it needs change — perhaps radical change — if it is to meet the challenges to come. It is hardly possible to overstate what is at stake, not only for this Organization but for all the peoples of this world, for whose safety this Organization was created. If we do not act resolutely and together, the threats described in the report can overwhelm us.

Do we want the human cost of HIV/AIDS to accumulate to the point where societies and States collapse? Do we want to face a future cascade of nuclear proliferation? Next time we are faced with genocide, will we again resign ourselves to watching passively until it is too late? Do we want to raise our children in a world where small groups of terrorists can murder hundreds of thousands at any moment?

The answer to all those questions must surely be a resounding no. And that means getting serious about prevention across the full range of threats that we face. Either we turn our backs on the very notion of collective security or we must work hard to make sure that collective security really means something and that we are able, in a practical and decisive manner, to lay out a new agenda and act on it in the years to come.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

We cannot fool ourselves that this will be easy. I challenged the members of the Panel to take up the toughest issues that divide us and to give me recommendations that are far-sighted but possible. They have risen to that challenge, and now the burden falls on you, the Member States. It is up to you to act on their recommendations and to make 2005 the year of change for the United Nations.

As members know, the Panel has made a variety of recommendations. Some are within my purview to implement and I will move ahead quickly to do so. In particular, I intend to take the lead, as the Panel has asked me to do, in promoting a new comprehensive, principled strategy against terrorism. I will present the outlines of this strategy for the Assembly's consideration in the new year.

Other recommendations, such as those related to the reform of the Secretariat, have budgetary implications. On these I stand ready to provide the Assembly with more detailed recommendations and, based on the Assembly's guidelines, a plan of implementation.

Forgive me if at this point I pause to give special emphasis to one of the Panel's recommendations: the one in which it urges Member States to support and fully fund the proposed Directorate of Security and to accord high priority to assisting me in implementing the new staff security system in 2005. Recent events have taught us, in the most painful way imaginable, how necessary that is, and rigorous investigation has shown that the losses we have suffered are in large part due to defects in our security system.

Those defects must be remedied. Let me remind the Assembly once again that United Nations staff serve in dangerous environments not for my satisfaction, nor yet for their own, but because you, the Member States, have decided that their work is needed there. Unhappily, we cannot, in this increasingly volatile and dangerous world, carry out the mandates that you give us without adequate security arrangements. I therefore appeal to you once again to back those mandates with the decisions on security that they clearly entail.

Some of the Panel's recommendations are addressed to different parts of the United Nations system: to various principal organs or to the specialized agencies. I trust that each will take them up and consider them with due urgency, and I will discuss this with the heads of those agencies and programmes. And some, finally, are broad policy recommendations, such as those on the linkage between security and development.

It is important now that all Member States have the opportunity to make their voices heard in this General Assembly and to deliberate among themselves on all aspects of the report. I know that Members are considering discussions around clusters of issues, and I commend that approach.

In March, I will submit to the Assembly my review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. In it, I will draw heavily on the ideas in the Panel's report. But I will also draw on the Assembly's discussions over the coming months. It is my hope that the summit to be held next September will be comprehensive in scope and will be able to reach decisions on the important policy issues.

But, as I stressed in my note transmitting the report last week, there are many recommendations that do not need to wait until September. Where we can reach agreement and act sooner, we should not hesitate to do so.

I said that 2005 is important. It is, indeed, critical. We must make progress and come to agreement on the changes we need in this Organization. It is not simply a matter of making the Organization better; it is a matter of confronting, in the only way possible, the real and present dangers that lie in wait for us.

That task will last well beyond 2005. I look forward to working with all Members, not only to make this coming year a success, but to embark on processes of dialogue and reform, which will need to continue in the years ahead.

Finally, let me express once more my gratitude to the Chair and members of the Panel and the research team for the excellent work they have done. From the circumstances when use of force is legitimate to the definition of terrorism, they were able to find a common position, despite the wide differences in their backgrounds, on issues which for years have divided and paralysed the international community. I find that very encouraging. It gives me hope that the nations of the world, acting through their representatives here, can make a similar effort to overcome their differences and thus give new meaning and validity to the name "United Nations".

The President (*spoke in French*): The Secretary-General has just received a rare and precious standing ovation from the General Assembly. I interpret that lengthy acclamation as an expression of Members' support for his actions and of their confidence in him and in his work at the helm of the United Nations.

In a world beset by doubt, confusion and, at times, confrontation, the Secretary-General has always remained a point of reference and a source of inspiration and wisdom for millions of people throughout the world. It is therefore unreservedly that I, too, join in that vivid act of homage. Moreover, I see in that expression of support the firm attachment of States Members to the ideals and values of the United Nations, in particular at this critical time in our history.

The report that the Secretary-General has just introduced bears clear witness to his resolve to contribute towards the adaptation of our Organization to the realities of a world undergoing deep changes and o ensure that it becomes an ever more effective instrument, allowing us collectively to meet threats old and new and the challenges of this century. Once again, I warmly congratulate the Secretary-General on his significant initiative.

I also wish to congratulate all the members of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change for the bold recommendations and clarity of vision they evince in the report for building a safer world of greater freedom and solidarity. I also note with particular interest the role which the report accords to the General Assembly as a forum for dialogue among nations in the quest for appropriate solutions to the problems confronting humankind. All Members will certainly take account of the recommendations set forth for the reform of the United Nations, especially throughout the preparatory process for the meeting of the High-level Panel scheduled for September 2005.

We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 55.

The meeting rose at noon.

United Nations

A/59/PV.69

General Assembly

Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

69th plenary meeting

Wednesday, 8 December 2004, 3 p.m.

New York

President: Mr. Ping .... (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Typhoon in the Philippines

The President (*spoke in French*): Before proceeding to the items on our agenda, I should like, on behalf of the members of the General Assembly, to extend our deep sympathy to the Government and people of the Philippines for the tragic loss of life and immense amount of material damage caused by the recent typhoon. I also express the hope that the international community will respond promptly and generously in solidarity to any request for help.

Mr. Baja (Philippines): On behalf of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and the people of the Philippines, I thank the General Assembly most profoundly for its expression of sympathy and solidarity with the Philippine people as they slowly emerge from the tragedy of death and the destruction of property and livelihood that occurred in the Philippines during the past weeks.

The Philippines is deeply indebted to those who have promptly responded to our urgent appeal for assistance. We thank the United Nations, particularly the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the United Nations Development Programme, the World Health Organization and UNICEF, as well as Member States Australia, Belgium, Canada, the People's Republic of China, Germany, the Republic of Korea, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States, and also the European Union for their rapid response in extending emergency assistance.

We deeply appreciate the gesture of the United States in sending an entire Marine Air Group based in Okinawa, Japan, composed of over 600 troops and more than a dozen medium- and heavy-lift helicopters and transport planes to assist in the ongoing relief efforts and in airlifting the sick and injured from areas that have been isolated by the disaster.

We also thank non-governmental organizations such as the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Oxfam, Médecins sans Frontières, Télécoms sans Frontières, Caritas, Catholic Relief Services, Church World Service, Christian Aid, World Vision, InterAction, Food for the Hungry, Action by Churches Together, and many others. We express our sympathy to the victims and our appreciation to other Governments for their expressions of sympathy.

Much still needs to be done in the coming days and weeks to help those affected to cope with the aftermath of the calamity. President Arroyo has reiterated an appeal for more assistance. We will need help in preventing the spread of diseases and in restoring power, communications and water services to the affected population. We will need all the help we can get in the reconstruction and post-disaster rehabilitation of the affected areas.

Once again, thank you.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

Agenda item 17

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(a) Appointment of members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/582)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Fifth Committee, in paragraph 7 of its report, recommends that the General Assembly appoint the following persons as members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2005: Mr. Ronald Elkhuizen (Netherlands), Mr. Jorge Flores Callejas (Honduras), Mr. Jerry Kramer (Canada), Ms. Sun Minqin (China), Mr. Rajat Saha (India) and Mr. Jun Yamazaki (Japan).

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint those persons I just mentioned as members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in French*): We turn now to the report of the Fifth Committee on sub-item (b) of agenda item 17, entitled "Appointment of members of the Committee on Contributions", contained in document A/59/583.

In paragraph 6 of the report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly appoint the following persons as members of the Committee on Contributions for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2005: Mr. David Dutton (Australia), Mr. Paul Ekorong a Dong (Cameroon), Mr. Bernardo Greiver del Hoyo (Uruguay), Mr. Hassan Mohammed Hassan (Nigeria), Mr. Eduardo Héctor Iglesias (Argentina) and Mr. Eduardo Manuel da Fonseca Fernandes Ramos (Portugal).

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint those persons I just mentioned as members of the Committee on Contributions?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in French*): In paragraph 7 of the same report, the Fifth Committee also recommends that the General Assembly appoint Mr. Vyacheslav Anatolievich Logutov (Russian Federation) as a member of the Committee on Contributions for a term of office beginning on 1 January 2005 and ending on 31 December 2005.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint this person I just mentioned as a member of the Committee on Contributions?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now invite members to turn their attention to the report of the Fifth Committee on sub-item (c) of agenda item 17, entitled "Confirmation of the appointment of members of the Investments Committee", contained in document A/59/584.

The Fifth Committee recommends in paragraph 5 of its report that the General Assembly confirm the appointment by the Secretary-General of the following persons as members of the Investments Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2005: Mr. William McDonough (United States of America), Ms. Hélène Ploix (France) and Mr. Jürgen Reimnitz (Germany).

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to confirm the appointment of those persons I just mentioned as members of the Investments Committee?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in French*): In paragraph 6 of the same report, the Fifth Committee also recommends that the General Assembly confirm the appointment by the Secretary-General of Mr. Khaya Ngqula (South Africa) as a member of the Investments Committee for a term of office beginning in December 2004 and expiring on 31 December 2006.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to confirm the appointment of this person I just mentioned as a member of the Investments Committee?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in* French): May I now invite members to turn their attention to the report of the Fifth Committee on sub-item (d) of agenda item 17, entitled "Appointment of members of the United Nations Administrative Tribunal", contained in document A/59/585?

In paragraph 5 of its report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly appoint the following persons as members of the United Nations Administrative Tribunal for a four-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2005: Mr. Goh Joon Seng (Singapore), Mr. Spyridon Flogaitis (Greece) and Ms. Brigitte Stern (France).

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint those persons I just mentioned as members of the United Nations Administrative Tribunal?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in French*): We turn now to the report of the Fifth Committee on sub-item (e) of agenda item 17, entitled "Appointment of members and alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee", contained in document A/59/586.

In paragraph 4 of the report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly appoint the following persons as members or alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee for a four-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2005: Mr. Kenshiro Akimoto (Japan), Mr. Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry (Pakistan), Ms. Valeria María González Posse (Argentina), Mr. Andrei Vitalievitch Kovalenko (Russian Federation), Mr. Gerhard Küntzle (Germany), Mr. Lovemore Mazemo (Zimbabwe), Mr. Philip Richard Okanda Owade (Kenya) and Mr. Thomas Repasch (United States of America).

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint those persons I just mentioned as members or alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in French*): We turn now to the report of the Fifth Committee on sub-item (f) of agenda item 17, entitled "Appointment of members of the International Civil Service Commission", contained in document A/59/587.

In paragraph 6 of the report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly appoint the following persons as members of the International Civil Service Commission for a four-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2005: Mr. Fatih Bouayad-Agha (Algeria), Mr. Shamsher Chowdhury (Bangladesh), Mr. Vladimir Titov (Russian Federation), Mr. Xiaochu Wang (China) and Mr. El Hassane Zahid (Morocco).

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint those persons I just mentioned as members of the International Civil Service Commission?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in French*): May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-items (a) to (f) of agenda item 17?

It was so decided.

Agenda items 27 and 39

The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

(d) Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/581)

Draft resolution (A/59/L.44)

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Chief, General Assembly Affairs Branch): I should like to inform members of the following corrections to draft resolution A/59/L.44.

In part B of the draft resolution, operative paragraph 4 bis should be renumbered as operative paragraph 5 and the subsequent operative paragraphs should be renumbered accordingly. These corrections will be reflected in the final version of the draft resolution.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Germany to introduce draft resolution A/59/L.44.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): As in previous years, I again have the honour to introduce the annual General Assembly draft resolution on Afghanistan (A/59/L.44), under agenda items 27 and 39(d). Allow me to underscore from the outset that Germany fully aligns herself with the statement of the European Union, which will be presented later by the Netherlands as the Presidency of the European Union.

Three years ago, the Afghan people seized the opportunity to end two decades of civil war. They decided to lead their country towards democracy, the rule of law and the promotion of human rights, and concluded the Bonn Agreement. Since then, many advances have been made along this path. Most recently, the international community witnessed the first direct election of the head of State in Afghan history and applauded the Afghan people for their commitment to casting their ballots. Yesterday, President Karzai was inaugurated.

Since last year's resolution, tremendous progress has been made in implementing the Bonn Agreement. In January 2004, a pluralistic and democratic constitution was adopted. Substantive improvements in the empowerment of women in Afghan politics have been achieved. Through the National Development Framework, the Afghan Government now assumes greater responsibilities in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the country.

At the same time, there is still a long way to go. The positive momentum created by the successful presidential election in October must be perpetuated. The following four major challenges lie ahead: first and foremost, the timely organization and implementation of parliamentary, provincial and district elections, now scheduled for April 2005 by the Joint Electoral Management Body; secondly, the continuation and substantial completion of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process before these elections; thirdly, the fight against the increase in the cultivation, production and trafficking of narcotic drugs; and fourthly, the lack of security caused by factional violence, drug trafficking, banditry and terrorism.

These challenges are all interconnected, with the issue of security at their core. A secure environment is essential not only for the holding of free and fair elections, but also for the success of the democratic process as such, as well as for reconstruction and economic development in Afghanistan. Factional violence, criminal activities and terrorism are sponsored by drug-related revenues. Unless this source is closed and the DDR process is completed, security will remain seriously threatened. It is therefore of utmost importance that the DDR process be completed in a comprehensive manner throughout the country, and that a counter-narcotics strategy be pursued decisively by the Afghan Government, with the substantive assistance of the international community.

This year's draft resolution focuses on three major challenges: elections, DDR and the fight against narcotics. Our aim was to streamline the text and to point out the recent achievements as well as the major obstacles on Afghanistan's path towards a stable democracy. Let me highlight the key aspects of the text.

Concerning the upcoming parliamentary and local elections, a joint and accelerated effort by Afghan authorities, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the international community is needed in order to make these elections as successful as the presidential election in October. The preparation for parliamentary and local elections will be far more complex than it was for the presidential poll. While UNAMA and the Joint Electoral Management Body will have to ensure that the technical requirements are met to facilitate timely and inclusive elections, the international community will have to consider further financial commitments and the provision of international election monitoring.

It is important to note that the issues of irregular militias and ammunition stockpiles have to be addressed in the context of the DDR process. Only a comprehensive and nationwide DDR process will enable the central Government authority to provide a security situation conducive to the holding of free and fair elections.

Also, in light of a 64 per cent surge in opium cultivation and a 17 per cent rise in opium production within the last year, the fight against narcotics and organized crime has to be prominently addressed in this draft resolution. Efforts not only by the Afghan Government but also by its neighbouring countries, by the countries along trafficking routes and by the international community as a whole must be stepped up in order to tackle this problem. A comprehensive approach is needed: the effort to eliminate illicit poppy cultivation has to include not only increased law enforcement, interdiction and the eradication of illicit crops, but also support for demand reduction, crop substitution and other alternative livelihood and development programmes as well as public awareness and capacity-building for drug control institutions. The efforts of the Afghan authorities to implement their national drug control strategy and to pursue the concrete steps set out in the work plan of the Afghan Government, which was presented at the International Conference on Afghanistan in Berlin in April 2004, must be continued and accelerated.

This year's draft resolution also reflects the progress that has been achieved on the humanitarian side, especially in the field of human rights, including women's rights. In addition to the Afghan Government, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission plays a key role in this regard and should expand its range of operations to all parts of Afghanistan.

Nevertheless, many areas remain of great concern. Continuing reports of trafficking in children make us believe that Afghanistan and the international community must devote more attention and greater efforts to stopping this absolutely unacceptable abuse of children. Millions of returnees struggle to find their place in society and often become internally displaced persons. Drought is a threat to food security in certain provinces for the seventh consecutive year. Sufficient health and education services in all parts of the country are still at the formation stage. As a consequence, the maternal mortality rate in Afghanistan is among the highest in the world.

Afghanistan is a country in transition. Not only is humanitarian assistance needed, the Bonn process also foresees an integrated package of relief, recovery and reconstruction measures. From the start, the aim was to transform direct assistance into support for the Government's own development plans. We appreciate the coherent strategy for Afghan development. While weaknesses in the capacities of governmental and administrative institutions remain, the International Conference on Afghanistan, the Afghan Development Forum and this year's development budget represent significant steps forward in improving reconstruction under the Government's own leadership.

For many years now, Germany has felt a special commitment to Afghanistan, bilaterally as well as within the United Nations. This builds on a long-standing tradition of exchange between the Afghan and German peoples in the cultural and academic sectors. From the beginning, the German commitment has embraced many projects in the fields of education and human rights. Germany also took the lead role in establishing the Afghan police force. Germany's civil and military engagement now extends well beyond Kabul, to Kunduz, Herat and Feyzabad, Badakhshan province. In April 2004, Germany hosted the International Conference on Afghanistan in Berlin.

Germany believes that the international community must remain committed to Afghanistan. I therefore appeal to all Member States to implement the pledges they made at Berlin and Tokyo and to contribute, inter alia, to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund and the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan, which are still not adequately funded today.

Whereas bilateral assistance is necessary and most welcome, the United Nations is and will remain the key body for aiding and supporting our Afghan friends in rebuilding their society, their economy and their country. The United Nations has admirably taken on this task. I would like to express my deep and sincere gratitude to the Secretary-General and his former and current Special Representatives, Lakhdar Brahimi and Jean Arnault, as well as to their staffs. Members of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, the International Security Assistance Force, the Operation Enduring Freedom coalition, as well as national and international humanitarian personnel from governmental and non-governmental organizations do a tremendous job under difficult and often very dangerous circumstances. It is essential that they be able to continue their work.

The large number of sponsors of draft resolution A/59/L.44 — more that 130 at present — demonstrates the continued importance Member States attach to developments in Afghanistan. I should like to announce that since the publication of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors: Armenia, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Haiti, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, the Marshall Islands, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, the Russian Federation, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, the United Republic of Tanzania and the United States of America. I am therefore optimistic that we will manage to help Afghanistan on its path towards becoming a democratic and free country, respectful of its multicultural, multi-ethnic and historical heritage.

I would like to express my gratitude to all Member States willing to sponsor this draft resolution, and I would deeply appreciate it if, as in the past with similar texts, we could adopt it by consensus.

Mr. Farhâdi (Afghanistan): Let me begin by mentioning the major event that took place yesterday, 7 December 2004: a historic day for the people of Afghanistan. The first democratically elected President of Afghanistan, Mr. Hâmid Karzai, was sworn in as President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. That outstanding and memorable occasion was welcomed and cherished by millions of Afghans all over Afghanistan. The presence at the ceremony of a large number of foreign dignitaries testifies to the international community's crucial interest in the consolidation of democracy, peace and stability in Afghanistan and in the region. We are confident that under the leadership of President Karzai, and with the strong and increased support of the international community, Afghanistan can look forward to witnessing reconstruction and development in all aspects of life.

Today, the General Assembly, one year after the adoption of resolution 58/27 of 5 December 2003, is examining and assessing political, economic and humanitarian developments in Afghanistan. With great satisfaction, we report to Member States that in the course of this year we have been able successfully to implement two major components of the historic Bonn Agreement: the adoption on 4 January 2004 of the new Constitution by the Constitutional Loya Jirga, acting as a constitutional grand assembly; and the presidential election on 9 October 2004. The final element of the Agreement, the parliamentary and local elections, will be fulfilled, as agreed, in the spring of 2005.

The people of Afghanistan, including women, have participated with great fervour and enthusiasm in the two political processes I have just mentioned. Women constituted 20 per cent of the 502 delegates of the constituent assembly and 40 per cent of the 8.5 million voters in the presidential election. The massive participation of Afghans in the election, despite the campaign of intimidation by Al Qaeda and the Taliban, showed that the great majority of the Afghans resolutely wish to live in peace and security after decades of armed conflict.

In the course of the current year, significant changes and transformations have occurred in various aspects of life in the country. There has been substantive progress in the empowerment of women. The principle of equality of men and women is incorporated in the new Constitution. In the lower house of the National Assembly, two seats for each of the 34 provinces of Afghanistan have been allocated to women. Afghanistan has become a party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and to the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is assisting Afghanistan in the drafting of national legislation for the implementation of the 12 universal instruments against terrorism.

The formation of the Afghan National Army is continuing successfully with the assistance of the United States and France. Likewise, the formation of the Afghan national police force is continuing with the help of Germany as lead nation. The Afghan national army and police were involved impressively in providing security for the presidential election. Italy is helping Afghanistan in the restoration of its judicial system and Japan is assisting the country to implement its disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme.

Despite the above-mentioned achievements, Afghanistan still faces a great number of challenges as a war-stricken country. The eradication of opium cultivation remains one of its major challenges. The links between criminal organizations, terrorists and drug trafficking create a situation that requires strong regional and international cooperation. In May 2003 Afghanistan adopted a national drug control strategy that encompasses increased law enforcement, crop substitution conducive to securing an alternative means of livelihood, and a development programme for rural areas. The United Kingdom is providing major assistance in this field. In accordance with the principle of shared responsibility, the international community is to assist Afghanistan in implementing its plan of action. The fight against the demand for heroin in the West calls for more effective action.

The reconstruction and development of Afghanistan demands a long-term commitment. We are confident that the international community will not disregard its commitment to assist Afghanistan. Our country's reconstruction and development is crucial for securing peace and cooperation in our region and in the world.

For the past six years, more than half of Afghanistan's provinces have sustained severe drought. As a result, crop yields were reduced during the 2004 harvest, and the cost of grain rose as a result. This natural disaster added further suffering to our already war-stricken people. We urgently appeal to the international community to provide the Afghan

Government with the humanitarian and financial assistance it requires.

Finally, we are sincerely thankful to the German Mission and to Ambassador Pleuger for his work in elaborating the draft resolution on Afghanistan currently before the Assembly (A/59/L.44) and leading the consultations with other interested delegations. We also appreciate the fruitful efforts in this matter of Mr. Ulrich Seidenberger and Mr. Axel Kuechle of the German Mission.

We are very thankful that we have a long list of co-sponsors of this draft resolution, and we invite the Assembly to consider it positively.

Mr. Hamburger (Netherlands): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Croatia, and the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro align themselves with this statement.

With the successful holding of the first-ever direct presidential elections, Afghanistan has taken another important step on the way to democracy. The success of the elections is a result of many factors and of the hard work of a variety of people and organizations. On behalf of the European Union, allow me to express our admiration of the Afghan people for their eagerness and resolve to cast their ballots. I would also like to reiterate our congratulations to those who were involved in organizing and securing these elections in very challenging circumstances, namely the Joint Electoral Management Body, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and international and national security forces.

The European Union now looks forward to the parliamentary and local elections scheduled for next spring and stands ready to assist the Afghan Government and the United Nations to make these elections an equal success.

Notwithstanding this progress, many challenges remain. The security situation has deteriorated in many areas over the past year. Broad security threats caused by drug trafficking, factional fighting, banditry and terrorism not only significantly hamper the reconstruction process, they also continue to negatively impact the Bonn process. In his recent report, the Secretary-General has emphasized that in order to ensure the successful holding of parliamentary elections, progress needs to be made especially in the areas of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), counter-narcotics activities and security sector reform. The European Union therefore welcomes recent Security Council resolution 1563 (2004) by which the mandate for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is extended.

The European Union is concerned that narcotics are becoming an increasing threat to national security, social development and governmental effectiveness in Afghanistan. Afghanistan produces 87 per cent of the world's opium, a great part of which enters the European Union. Opium cultivation has increased by 64 per cent and production by 17 per cent from 2003 to 2004. The money earned in the drug trade finances a growing and destabilizing criminal economy in Afghanistan. We urge the international community and the Afghan Government to work together to tackle that problem which affects almost every aspect of Afghanistan's development and security. The national drug control strategy and the Afghan implementation plan must be vigorously implemented.

While we welcome the progress already made in the area of DDR, the European Union is convinced that there remains a need to intensify the DDR process. In that regard, the European Union shares the assessment of the Secretary-General that the issue of irregular militias needs to be addressed.

In order to ensure stability and security in Afghanistan in the future, the European Union also reiterates the importance for further progress, under the impulse of the lead nations, on all the items of security sector reform. Significant steps have been taken during the last year concerning the reconstitution of the Afghan national army and police and the reform of the justice system, but much more needs to be done.

The European Union remains concerned about continuing reports of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. It takes note of the report of the United Nations independent expert on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan in which a number of priority issues for immediate action are identified. We welcome in that regard the commitment of the Afghan Government to implement the human rights provisions of the new Afghan Constitution and to implement and report on ratified human rights treaties. In that context, the European Union attaches particular importance to the protection and promotion of women's rights and a better access by women to health and educational services.

Restoring overall security and establishing lasting peace in Afghanistan is impossible without the contribution of neighbouring countries. The European Union stresses the importance of regional cooperation and encourages the further development of good-neighbourly relations, building on the basis of the 2002 Kabul Declaration.

During past years, the European Union has supported the Afghan reconstruction process by providing substantial financial and technical aid. It has also provided humanitarian assistance where required, paying particular attention to those who need support the most, such as returnees and displaced persons. In that context, the European Union would like to stress the continuing importance of donor coordination in order to make the best use of resources.

Let me conclude by stressing that the European Union remains committed in the long term to the reconstruction, development and stabilization of Afghanistan. The Berlin work plan and its implementation by all parties must be the cornerstone of our engagement.

Mr. Kazykhanov (Kazakhstan): I have the honour to address the General Assembly today on behalf of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and its members, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The peace process in Afghanistan has been considerably strengthened since the Bonn Agreement was signed in 2001. The country is steadily eliminating the aftermath of the civil war by strengthening new executive authority, resolving the tasks of building its statehood, and rehabilitating its social and economic situation. The territory of that State is no longer a stronghold for international terrorism and presents no threat to its neighbours. Afghanistan has regained its position as an equal member of the international community.

At the same time, the settlement in Afghanistan is still confronted with serious problems. The way they are resolved will determine to a great extent whether or not the reforms become irreversible. The national presidential elections held on 9 October, the first in the country's history, were a momentous political event. We view them as the most important step on the way to the establishment of new institutions of State power based on democratic principles. We sincerely hope on behalf of the Afghan people that the election of the President facilitates the further consolidation of Afghan society and the establishment of democratic principles in that country.

Ensuring the unity of Afghanistan based on respect for the interests of all ethnicities and the observance of basic legal standards and human freedoms is a most pressing task. Hopefully, the implementation of that task will be facilitated by the parliamentary elections to be held in April 2005, and the international community should provide all-round support for their organization.

Unfortunately, the overall situation in Afghanistan is still characterized by persistent problems in the security area, while the Taliban and other extremist elements still pose challenges to stability in Afghanistan. While extremist elements had no possibility of openly contesting the highest State position in the presidential election campaign, during the forthcoming parliamentary elections they will undoubtedly make strenuous efforts to squeeze themselves into governing structures. Those attempts should be resolutely blocked. We are confident that that can be done without prejudice to the overall process of reconciliation in Afghan society.

The presence of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is crucial if security is to be enrooted in Afghanistan. It is obvious that, in order to stabilize the situation throughout the territory of that country, ISAF should substantially enlarge its presence, above all in the southern and south-eastern regions. The participating States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are actively assisting the international and coalition forces, inter alia, by offering their infrastructure for organizing logistics supplies and military transit.

We attach great importance to consistent compliance with the Kabul Declaration on Good-neighbourly Relations by the signatory States. All other countries should facilitate its implementation. We welcome international efforts to assist in creating the Afghan national army and police forces. However, a very cautious approach should be taken to the reform of the armed forces and of the entire Afghan security sector. We need to seek well-balanced representation of ethnic groups in security structures.

Much work has to be done before the Government of Afghanistan can succeed in remedying the situation surrounding illegal drug production and trafficking. There is therefore an urgent need to implement a set of social, economic and law enforcement measures within and outside the country. One of the key elements of that strategy is the need to strengthen existing and to create new anti-drugs "security belts". Participating States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are making an important contribution to resolving the drug problem by developing, among other things, specific political, legal and other operational measures within the organization. We are ready to coordinate our action with the Afghan Government and international and coalition forces in the country in that important field.

Considerable rehabilitation and reconstruction tasks are still to be carried out. It is important to ensure that the contributions announced at donor conferences are disbursed in a timely manner, reach the Afghan people and effectively ensure them a better quality of life. Participating States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, in turn, are providing diversified assistance to that country and are ready to further participate in international endeavours to rebuild its economy, taking into account the interests of the Afghan side and based on our many years' experience of cooperation with Afghanistan. Better regional economic cooperation is vital for the rehabilitation of Afghanistan. Therefore, we support the steps taken to that end.

The United Nations should continue to play a central coordinating role in the international efforts taken in Afghanistan. We support the active work done by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, Mr. Jean Arnault. Considering that, following parliamentary elections in Afghanistan in spring 2005, the schedule of the Bonn peace process will have been completed, it would seem expedient to determine and agree in advance upon the parameters of the international community's further participation in the new stage of the Afghan post-conflict process. At the same time, the agreements reached at the Berlin conference should be taken into account.

We believe that it is useful to carry on our work on Afghanistan within both the Security Council and the General Assembly. The decisions of the two organs are complementary rather than duplicating. We support the General Assembly's draft resolution on Afghanistan, prepared by a wide group of sponsors and introduced by Germany. We hope that its adoption by consensus will help to build on the concerted efforts of the international community in the interests of the rehabilitation of Afghanistan.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The first presidential election in the history of Afghanistan has been successfully concluded. Mr. Karzai won the election and was formally inaugurated on 7 December. China warmly welcomes that major achievement in Afghanistan's political and peace process, and sincerely congratulates President Karzai on his election.

Over the past three years, through the common efforts of the Interim Authority and the Transitional Government, as well as its entire people, Afghanistan has made notable progress in the realization of national reconciliation and the promotion of national reconstruction in demonstration of the strong desire of the Afghan people to be the true master of its own destiny and its firm resolve to work towards the long-term stability and peace of the country. This is a heartening development.

At the present time, Afghanistan is only a step away from completing the political process provided for in the Bonn Agreement, and yet, as the Chinese saying goes, "The first 90 miles are only halfway through a 100-mile journey". We hope that a specific timetable for parliamentary and local elections can be established as soon as possible so that the organizational work can proceed in an orderly manner so as to ensure successful elections.

Mr. Karzai still has many challenges ahead of him. Politically, he needs to unite different ethnic communities and factions and establish a highly efficient, clean, professional and broadly representative Government as soon as possible and to ensure the holding of parliamentary and local elections on schedule.

Economically, he needs to continue to heal the wounds of war, lay down a solid foundation for sustainable development, enhance self-sufficiency and continue to improve the living conditions of his people.

In the area of security, he needs to strengthen the authority of the central Government, eradicate the remnant forces of terrorism, rein in factional infighting and speed up the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process.

Furthermore, the war against narcotics in Afghanistan still has a long way to go. It is necessary to tackle the problem at its roots and carry out the 10-year anti-drug programme, with a view to meeting the target of eradicating illicit drugs in the country by the year 2012.

Although the road ahead may be bumpy, we hope and believe that under the leadership of President Karzai and with the efforts of all its people, as well as with the help of the international community, Afghanistan, this beautiful, ancient country of mountains, will soon emerge from the ravages of war, set out on the road towards stability and sound development and contribute to regional peace and prosperity.

Every step forward taken by Afghanistan crystallizes the solemn commitment and solid support of the international community. We appreciate the positive efforts made by the United Nations to promote peace and reconstruction in Afghanistan, and we believe that the Organization should continue to play a leading role in the question of Afghanistan. We also believe that the international community needs to continue to pay attention to peace and reconstruction in Afghanistan, provide all necessary help and make concerted efforts to advance peace and reconstruction in that country. China supports the adoption of the draft resolution (A/59/L.44), submitted by the Permanent Mission of Germany on this question.

As a neighbour of Afghanistan, China has closely followed the developments in that country. We have always respected the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Afghanistan and have consistently supported the political and peace processes there. We have actively participated in its post-war economic reconstruction, and we honoured our pledge to provide $150 million in assistance. At this stage, China is devoting the bulk of its assistance to the restoration of the Republic Hospital and the Parwan irrigation project. Together with Afghanistan's other neighbours, China and the Afghan Government have signed the Kabul Declaration on Good-Neighbourly Relations, aimed at promoting good-neighbourliness, friendship and cooperation; the Declaration on Encouraging Closer Trade, Transit and Investment Cooperation; and the Declaration on Counter-Narcotics, all within the Framework of the Kabul Declaration. We will take effective measures to implement these Declarations. China stands ready to make a greater contribution to peace and development in Afghanistan.

Mr. Alimov (Tajikistan) *(spoke in Russian)*: The entire world has witnessed how the courageous people of Afghanistan, within a very short period of time, carried out an historic breakthrough, moving towards the future with the support of the United Nations and the entire international community.

The date 9 October 2004 marked the first time in the history of the Afghan State that presidential elections were held; this event will go down in the history of the Afghan people as a day that signalled the starting point of a new life in the long-suffering land of Afghanistan.

Millions of Afghan voters, who that day came to the polls despite the danger of attacks, said loudly and firmly, "Yes", to the Bonn process and to the new authorities on whom they place hopes for further measures to consolidate Afghan society and to end its difficult social and economic situation. No less important is the fact that, through the expression of their free will, the men and women of Afghanistan uttered a firm "No" to civil war and international terrorism.

Tajikistan has noted with satisfaction the successes achieved in fraternal neighbouring Afghanistan. We are confident and hopeful that these gains will form the basis for the establishment of lasting peace and stability, the achievement of genuine national reconciliation and those long-awaited changes that the citizens of Afghanistan hope to see as a foundation for a dignified future life. A step towards achieving this end is in the parliamentary elections scheduled for April 2005. It is our hope that the international community, in carrying out the obligations it has undertaken, will render the necessary assistance in the holding of those elections.

We have all been witnesses to the difficult, often dangerous path to what has been achieved today in Afghanistan, and that path makes the success achieved all the more valuable. It is all the more important to strengthen that achievement and to build on it. In the light of the realities in Afghanistan today, that will not be possible without international support.

The participation of the international community continues to be a highly important factor for the maintenance of peace and for assisting the Bonn process. Many unresolved problems remain in the country, particularly in ensuring security and the rule of law. The opponents of the policy of President Hamid Karzai are continuing to concoct plans for undermining the Afghan peace process and for returning the country to the era of political chaos and lawlessness. Such a course of events would be a great disappointment, not only for millions of Afghan citizens who have finally breathed the air of freedom and who are living in hope of a speedy economic recovery and a political structure for the country, but also for the entire international community.

In that context, what is of great importance is the expansion of regions in which the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is present. Until the conclusion of the process of the formation of new Afghan security forces, ISAF will be playing an important, if not key, role. To a great extent, in our view, it is the presence of ISAF that will determine the success or the failure of the peace process in Afghanistan.

The growing production of narcotic drugs is also a major obstacle, not only to the success of the Bonn process, but also for the future of the Afghan State itself. In these circumstances, to counteract the danger of drugs — which was addressed by President Emomali Rakhmonov — we must now take further steps in terms of effective cooperation. It is clear that, to dismantle Afghanistan's "opium economy", fresh efforts will be needed — both in those countries through which Afghan opium products are transported and in those where heroin use is becoming a serious problem. Tajikistan, as a transit State, will be expanding its active participation in bilateral and multilateral cooperative efforts in this area of vital importance to us all.

Afghan society today is facing new challenges, and problems lie ahead that are no less complex than the ones of State-building and socio-economic recovery. It is clear that the process of building a new country and a new democratic State is a highly complex one.

The Tajik people have, in the recent past, successfully dealt with those problems. Tajikistan believes that, with a popularly elected President who now enjoys a broad mandate, the courageous Afghan people will be able to successfully cope with these difficult problems. Strong international support is imperative in order for progress to be achieved in all areas of the new Afghan society.

The United Nations must continue to play its pivotal role in coordinating international efforts in Afghanistan through the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. We deeply appreciate the Mission's selfless work and that of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan.

Mr. Radzi (Malaysia): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the Secretary-General; his Special Representative, Mr. Jean Arnaud; the relevant United Nations agencies; and all the men and women of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) for their remarkable efforts and for the valuable work that has been carried out in respect of Afghanistan, despite the prevailing difficult and dangerous conditions.

We are pleased to note that, since the signing of the Bonn Agreement three years ago, Afghanistan has registered impressive progress towards peacebuilding, recovery and reconstruction. Those achievements have been made possible, inter alia, by the improved security situation in the country. We believe that, with a functioning Government now in place, many essential measures to further enhance stability and establish confidence in the country can be effectively pursued and implemented. Those measures are not only vital for Afghanistan's peace and stability but will have a positive impact on peace and stability in the region.

However, like any other country emerging from decades of internal conflict, Afghanistan requires continuing support from the international community. The encouraging achievements made in the area of security and other essential areas must continue to be sustained and strengthened, including in particular the economic and social development of the country. Malaysia, in that respect, looks forward to cooperating closely with the Government of Afghanistan in the context of our bilateral relations and is ready to explore ways and means to continue to enhance our relations.

My delegation joins others in congratulating President Hâmid Karzai on his inauguration as the first democratically elected president of Afghanistan on 7 December 2004. We wish President Karzai and the people of Afghanistan success as they undertake the tasks of stabilization and reconstruction, including preparations for the upcoming parliamentary elections. The inauguration was a reflection of the success of the presidential election and, more importantly, of the will of the people to achieve peace and development.

The presidential election and the recently adopted Constitution are two crucial milestones envisaged by the Bonn Agreement that are necessary in the process of building a strong, democratic State in Afghanistan. My delegation believes that the election would not have been possible without the concerted efforts and excellent preparations undertaken by the Joint Electoral Management Body (JEMB) and UNAMA. My delegation appreciates the multifaceted difficulties faced by the JEMB. We congratulate it for its efforts, its dedication to address existing problems and its commitment to maintaining the transparency of the electoral process, leading to its success. We are encouraged by the impressive participation, enthusiasm and support of the Afghan people in the context of the electoral process and the peaceful and orderly environment in which the election took place.

It must be acknowledged that, although a measure of progress has been achieved in Afghanistan, there remain many challenges ahead that could present serious obstacles to the full recovery of that country. In that regard, my delegation urges the Government of Afghanistan, with the help of the international community, to continue to confront the remaining challenges in the following areas: security; timely preparations for the parliamentary elections in April 2005; the reconstruction of institutions; the fight against narcotics; and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of Afghan militias.

Malaysia calls on the international community to provide continued support to the Government and the people of Afghanistan as they rebuild their country, strengthen the foundations of constitutional democracy and assume their rightful place in the community of nations. We are encouraged by the Secretary-General's assurances of continuing commitment to assist the new Government in Kabul as it continues to address the vital tasks required to fulfil the letter and spirit of the Bonn Agreement. We fully support the Secretary-General. Malaysia stands ready to cooperate with him and will continue to provide, within our modest capacity, technical assistance and training to Afghans under the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme.

Malaysia notes with concern the report's observation that the cultivation and trafficking of narcotics remains a major challenge not only for Afghanistan but also for its neighbour countries and to the world at large. In that regard, we believe that the international community has an important role to play in forming a strong partnership with and assisting the Government of Afghanistan in its interdiction efforts to substantively decrease the drug trade in the near future, with a view to its total eradication in the long term; in strengthening its institutional capacity in the implementation of the rule of law; and in supporting the local economy through the provision of income-generating opportunities and the establishment of larger-scale infrastructure and industrial projects to provide non-farm income opportunities.

With regard to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process in Afghanistan, my delegation commends the important role played by the United Nations Development Programme and Japan. We note that the process of presidential elections itself had a positive effect on disarmament efforts. However, we are of the view that it would be pertinent to fully address security concerns prior to the parliamentary elections, to be held in April 2005. We call upon the Afghan Government to intensify its efforts to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate the warlords and their followers. Failure in this important area would risk the danger of unravelling the fragile peace achieved so far. In Malaysia's capacity as Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), my delegation wishes to reiterate the unflinching commitment of Malaysia and the other NAM members to Afghanistan, as reflected in the final document of the thirteenth NAM Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in February 2003 and the fourteenth Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement in Durban, South Africa in August 2004. In this connection, NAM has expressed its resolve to contribute to efforts to promote reconstruction and rehabilitation in Afghanistan during its nation-building process.

Afghanistan is on the road to recovery from the devastation of more than two decades of war. Despite the difficulties, the country has been able to accomplish relatively impressive progress in the past three years. We have to recognize, nonetheless, that the ongoing efforts will continue to be difficult and challenging. However, we are confident that a stable, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan will be established, and with the sustained and collaborative effort of the United Nations, the international community, the people of Afghanistan and their neighbours.

On this note, my delegation is pleased to join other delegations in co-sponsoring the draft resolution on this important question that has been introduced by the Permanent Representative of Germany, to whom we express our deep appreciation.

Mr. Kitaoka (Japan): Let me begin by congratulating President Karzai on his election and the successful inauguration of his Government yesterday. The registration of more than 10 million voters for the presidential election held last October was an impressive achievement, and fully 80 per cent of those registered actually voted. These results provide a clear demonstration of the strong determination of each and every Afghan citizen to build a truly democratic State. Japan has made a contribution to the successful presidential elections by extending financial assistance in the amount of $17 million and by sending Japanese election monitoring teams to Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran.

That said, the challenges remaining are still enormous in the lead-up to the parliamentary elections to be held next spring, the final goal of the Bonn process. I would like to discuss four points in this connection.

First, the preparations for the parliamentary elections are still at a preliminary stage. The process must be accelerated. In order to maintain and enhance the momentum created by the successful presidential election, it is important that the parliamentary elections be held on schedule in April and May of next year, and, for that goal, more assistance from the international community will be required.

Secondly, with regard to the issue of security, I must note that it is remarkable that there were no major disturbances during the presidential election. We highly appreciate the contribution of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and especially the role played by Afghanistan's own security forces. We are also proud to say that Japan Self-Defense Forces vessels are still engaged in activities in the Indian Ocean in support of Operation Enduring Freedom's maritime interdiction operation of the coalition countries fighting against terrorism in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the repeated attacks occurring throughout the country remind us that security is still extremely precarious and needs to be substantially improved. We believe that the progress made to date in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), for which Japan has taken the lead in providing assistance, together with the United Nations, has also contributed significantly to the creation of an environment conducive to the organization of a fair election. However, successful DDR alone will not be sufficient to improve the security situation. Overall progress in security sector reform, including continued work on formation of the national army and police force, is necessary. We will therefore make further efforts in coordination with our Afghan and international partners.

Thirdly, we are seriously concerned about the drug production and trafficking problem. While the international and national effort continues, a tremendous harvest in opium and trafficking in that drug overshadow the peace process. Illicit drug trafficking generates the illegal earnings that hinder the efforts to reconstruct the country. Effective counter-narcotics measures are of critical importance in order to promote effective unification and nation-building in Afghanistan.

For my fourth and final point, let me say that, while we welcome the achievements in various sectors in Afghanistan, if we wish to consolidate peace and make it sustainable, it is imperative that further, community-based development assistance be made available, particularly in the provinces. An example of such efforts is the Ogata Initiative, a comprehensive regional development plan that is currently under way. Moreover, we recognize that the rehabilitation of infrastructure is essential to support Afghanistan's efforts to reconstruct the country. This October, we completed the Kabul-Kandahar road rehabilitation project and we have just launched the Kandahar-Heart road rehabilitation project. Our assistance to Afghanistan has amounted to more than $800 million in total since September 2001. We remain strongly committed to continuing our support to Afghanistan.

The experience in Afghanistan is a test case for the United Nations and the international community to determine how to go about providing support and encouraging the initiative of the people to rebuild a failed State. The Bonn process is approaching its final stage, but cooperation between Afghanistan and the international community must not end with the completion of the Bonn process. We appeal to all

Member States to renew and enhance their solidarity and cooperation with the Afghan people, who need our support now more than ever.

Mr. Hannesson (Iceland): At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his latest report on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security, and on emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan.

Important progress has obviously been made in the three years since the signing of the Bonn Agreement. As regards recent developments in the political sector, the adoption of the new Constitution by Afghanistan's Constitutional Grand Assembly — the Loya Jirga — on 4 January 2004 and the holding of the presidential elections on 9 October 2004 both mark milestones.

We take this opportunity, as have previous speakers, to repeat our sincere congratulations to President Hamid Karzai on his victory in this first direct presidential election in Afghanistan. We congratulate the Afghan people for the commitment they have shown to bring about and secure democracy in their country. We also commend all parties involved for their role in organizing and safeguarding the elections.

The strong participation of women in the election, representing 40 per cent of the voters, is remarkable, not least in the light of their systematic exclusion under the Taliban regime.

Contrary to what had been feared, international observer missions, such as the Election Support Team from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, concluded that the election process had been conducted in a peaceful and orderly manner. Although shortcomings were detected, they were considered to be organizational in nature rather than dishonest. Shortcomings can be overcome by applying lessons learned in preparations for future elections, most notably for the parliamentary and local elections scheduled for the spring of 2005.

The Secretary-General makes it clear in his report that immense challenges still lie ahead. Attacks in recent months, and the abduction of international electoral staff, exemplify the dire security situation still existing in Afghanistan. That, in turn, has a negative impact on reconstruction efforts. My Government once again deplores all attacks, in every form, against civilians and United Nations and non-governmental organization staff.

The Afghanistan Opium Survey 2004, released in November by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, provides an alarming account of what the Secretary-General considers in his report to be an increased "threat to national security, social stability and governmental effectiveness". Opium cultivation in Afghanistan grew by 64 per cent from 2003 to 2004, setting a double record for the highest opium cultivation in the country's history and the largest in the world. Afghanistan produces nearly 90 per cent of the world's opium. We continue to stress the need to address all aspects of the illicit trade — namely, production capacity, trade routes and users. This is obviously a joint task for the international community.

Finally, Iceland, which together with Afghanistan and Sweden joined the United Nations on 19 November 1946 as the first non-founding United Nations Members, is pleased to be among the traditional sponsors of the draft resolution on Afghanistan, prepared by the delegation of Germany, and is indeed deeply committed to making its contribution towards establishing security in Afghanistan.

On 1 June 2004, the Icelandic contingent in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) took on a leading role in running Kabul International Airport, where it provides the Airport Commander and other key personnel, including flight operations staff, firefighters and additional technical specialists. Considerable progress has been made during the past five months; the airport's infrastructure has been improved and reforms have been implemented in its operating functions. The facility constitutes one of the key elements in ISAF's successful operation and in the reconstruction efforts taking place in the country. On 1 February 2005, the management of the airport will be handed over to Turkey, and Iceland wishes Turkey every success in carrying out its new responsibilities. Icelanders will continue to work at the airport until mid-2005.

As regards further participation from Iceland in the ongoing rebuilding efforts in Afghanistan, my Government is now considering providing personnel to the provincial reconstruction teams in the northern part of the country.

Mr. Danesh-Yazdi (Islamic Republic of Iran): May I begin by expressing our gratitude to the

Secretary-General for his informative and lucid report to the General Assembly on various aspects of the situation in Afghanistan over the past 12 months. His dedication and efforts directed towards the improvement of the situation in Afghanistan, and those of his current and previous Special Representatives, Mr. Arnault and Ambassador Brahimi, respectively, deserve our profound admiration and support. We are confident that such inspired commitment will help the Afghan Government and people as they strive for durable peace, normalcy and security in their country.

The year 2004 has marked a new era in the history of Afghanistan. In the course of the year, the country has witnessed two major and unprecedented developments — the approval by the Constitutional Loya Jirga of a new constitution in January, and the holding of a successful presidential election in October. Those two historic events have not only shaped the political landscape of the country, they have also diminished the temptation and scepticism that had surfaced to undermine the will of the Afghan nation to establish a free and democratic society.

We are, therefore, pleased to witness the first outcome of this political process, which marks the election of President Karzai as the first democratically elected head of State in Afghanistan. We warmly congratulate President Karzai on his election and wish him every success in leading the country through this important period. Moreover, we earnestly hope that this positive and decisive development will be further pursued through the holding of timely, fair and free parliamentary and local elections and by the establishment of a broad-based, representative and multi-ethnic Government. To accomplish such a huge mission will undeniably be difficult and burdensome. Thus the international community should make every effort to help the Afghan Government remove existing hurdles so as to achieve that objective.

The recent report of the Secretary-General on Afghanistan (A/59/581) refers to progress made and reforms planned in the economic and social fields, particularly in public administration, fiscal management and the national education system. The Afghan Government has also taken major steps to implement projects involving disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, as well as the development of the new Afghan national army and an Afghan national police force and the creation of a fair and effective justice system. These projects would address the important challenges that the country has been facing for a long time.

Despite such commendable efforts, much remains to be done and major challenges still lie ahead. The terrorist and extremist threats — mostly from the remnants of the Taliban and Al Qaeda — drug trafficking, criminal activities and factional violence are just the main challenges to the stability of the country. Undoubtedly, strengthening the Afghan national army and police and expansion of the authority of the central Government across the country are essential steps which need to be continued to provide security throughout Afghanistan.

Continued increase in the cultivation, production and trafficking of narcotic drugs in Afghanistan is an alarming challenge that, despite the sincere efforts made by the Afghan Government, has endangered the security of the country and its political, economic and social development, along with regional stability. Undoubtedly, insecurity and drug trafficking in Afghanistan are mutually reinforcing and each contributes to terrorism and other forms of transnational crime.

Across the globe, the lines between international organized crime and global terrorism have become blurred and the links between them have grown in the past decade, thus making it imperative and indispensable that the international community begin revamping its strategy for the war on those menaces.

As the remnants of the Taliban and Al Qaeda are among the major beneficiaries of drug money, there is an absolute need for the international community to assist the Afghan Government to implement its comprehensive national drug control strategy, inter alia, through building institutions, eliminating illicit poppy cultivation, reducing the demand for illicit drugs, crop substitution, strengthening law enforcement and promoting alternative livelihoods.

Since the fight against drug trafficking is more effective and less costly along Afghan borders, the international community should support the efforts by the States neighbouring Afghanistan and those along the trafficking routes to curb the flow of illicit drugs. As is well known, the Islamic Republic of Iran, for its part, has fought a costly war against heavily armed drug traffickers during the past two decades and stands ready to continue that undesirable fight as long as this calamity persists in affecting our society and security.

The cost of that fight is not exclusively economic in nature; we have lost more than 3,300 law enforcement personnel in the war against drug traffickers over the past 25 years. Only last year 48 officers were killed in more than 2,300 gun battles with drug traffickers.

As a result of that resolute policy, Iran stands at the forefront of the worldwide drug battle. However, we cannot conceal the bitter reality that, despite our costly and extensive campaign against this menace, drug trafficking has been on the rise over the past year due to the increase in the cultivation and production of drugs in Afghanistan. For Iran to sustain its ongoing fierce fight against drug trafficking, international support, and especially the cooperation of neighbouring countries, is indispensable.

The cultivation and production of drugs have become major sources of income for many farmers and producers, thus diminishing incentives to search for alternative, licit sources. That is particularly true in the case of Afghanistan, where insecurity and the collapse of the economic infrastructure have contributed to widespread unemployment, poverty and lack of economic activities in the country. Thus, the Afghan reconstruction process is a priority that should be effectively implemented in all fields.

The international community, led by the United Nations, should also redouble its efforts in the provision of international assistance for the development and reconstruction of Afghanistan. Iran, for its part, has had an active role and presence in the process of the reconstruction of Afghanistan and has tried to fulfil the promise it made at the Tokyo Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan. In that regard, the Islamic Republic of Iran has been engaged in various infrastructure activities in Afghanistan, including electricity projects, road construction, manpower training and humanitarian services.

In general, Iran's contribution to the reconstruction of Afghanistan has amounted so far to almost $150 million over the last three years. At the same time, we are currently engaged in more than 40 projects in both Iran and Afghanistan to help promote the foreign trade of that land-locked country. It may be worth mentioning that the Milak Bridge, planned and constructed by Iran on the border between the two countries, was inaugurated on 20 November this year. The bridge, also known as the Silk Bridge, plays a key role in developing and facilitating trade with Afghanistan.

A number of smaller projects, in particular those that supply electric power, have also been inaugurated to help 4,000 Afghan families who live in the vicinity of the Iran-Afghan border. Iran also extended its full cooperation to the relevant United Nations bodies and other international organizations, as well as to the Government of Afghanistan, for the out-of-country participation of Afghan refugees who were living in Iran during the presidential election of 9 October. Afghan refugees in Iran were able to cast their votes in approximately 1,000 polling stations at 250 locations in seven major cities of our country.

As to the voluntary return of refugees from the Islamic Republic of Iran to Afghanistan, we are fully committed to the implementation of the trilateral agreement we signed with the Afghan Government and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. At the same time, a more thorough approach by the Afghan Government and the international community to help create a stable basis for the return of refugees is imperative.

I cannot conclude my statement without affirming our resolve to continue to help the Afghan Government and people to overcome the enormous challenges they still face. The international community should also foster closer and broader cooperation under the auspices of this world Organization towards the consolidation of peace, security and stability in Afghanistan.

In view of our principled position, we join the sponsors of draft resolution A/59/L.44 and extend our appreciation to the German delegation for its excellent work in the preparation and finalization of the draft resolution.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): This week marks the third anniversary of the historic Bonn Agreement, which was the turning point in Afghanistan's transition from war to peace. Pakistan has worked very closely with the international community in the implementation of the Bonn process. During the last year, two important benchmarks in this process have been achieved — the successful conclusion of the constitutional process, and the holding of the presidential elections in Afghanistan. President Hamid Karzai's inauguration this week as the elected President of Afghanistan was the manifestation of those successful steps in the Bonn process. President Musharraf visited Kabul last month to personally congratulate President Karzai.

While the Bonn process is on track, security remains the most serious challenge to peace and prosperity in Afghanistan. We thank the Secretary-General for his informative report. It identifies the following main threats to Afghanistan's security: extremist or terrorist attacks, factional violence among militia forces and violence and other threats to human security by criminal elements, in particular those involved in the trafficking of drugs.

In our view, the most serious threat emanates from the warlords and factional militias, and the nexus between them and drug traffickers. Robust measures and resolute action are therefore required to address those threats. Such measures include comprehensive disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of all factional militias and the demilitarization of Kabul. The Bonn process will remain incomplete until that is achieved. To facilitate DDR, it is necessary to ensure a robust presence of the International Security Assistance Force and to accelerate the creation of a professional and ethnically integrated Afghan national army and police, security and intelligence services and institutions. State authority needs to be extended across the country. A national reconciliation policy, aimed at incorporating all Afghans willing to join the rebuilding of the country, will also help in the national integration process.

Pakistan recognizes the serious threat to Afghanistan's security from the resurgence of extremist forces, including Taliban remnants and Al Qaeda. We have been working closely with United States and Afghan authorities to strengthen security along the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan through the Trilateral Commission. Pakistan has deployed over 75,000 troops along this difficult 2,500-kilometre-long border. Extensive antiterrorist operations have been undertaken. We have captured over 600 Al Qaeda and Taliban terrorist elements. Unfortunately, Pakistan has lost over 200 soldiers and policemen in those operations. For the complete success of the operations, it is essential that Pakistan's substantial security presence be matched by a commensurate security presence on the Afghan side of the international border.

We welcome the discerning new approach adopted by President Karzai's Government to separate ordinary Afghans from the terrorists, who continue to challenge the authority of the central Government. National reconciliation in Afghanistan now demands a new approach, one which casts off the shackles of war and looks forward to the dawn of peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Over the last two decades Pakistan has hosted millions of Afghan refugees without much appreciable assistance from the international community. We are pleased with the voluntary repatriation of many of them over the past few years. However, we remain concerned that the repatriation process has slowed due to insecurity in Afghanistan, as well as the absence of economic opportunity for the returnees. To ensure sustainable returns, we hope that recovery and reconstruction assistance will be especially targeted on the rural areas where most of the refugees come from.

The first person to cast a vote in the Afghan presidential elections was a 19-year-old Afghan woman in Pakistan. We expect that the Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran — who constitute 20 to 30 per cent of the Afghan population — will be able to exercise their democratic right to vote in the forthcoming parliamentary elections as they did in the Afghan presidential elections. Such a large proportion of the Afghan population obviously cannot be disenfranchised. We strongly urge the Afghan and international authorities to make the necessary preparations for out-of-country voting by the Afghan refugees in the parliamentary elections. Pakistan stands ready to assist them in this process.

Afghanistan's peace and stability depend on security and a stable political process, but that can be sustained only through reconstruction and development. In this context, the level of reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in Afghanistan remains inadequate and disappointing.

The economic vacuum is being filled by the illicit production of and trafficking in narcotics. The international community must simultaneously combat illicit drugs and energize reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. In addition, comprehensive counter-narcotic strategies must seek to provide income-generation and an alternative livelihood to Afghan farmers, to wean them away from poppy production. Efforts will also be required to reduce the demand for Afghan drugs in destination countries, as well as to combat illicit trafficking of precursors, which play an essential part in the production of narcotic drugs.

At the Tokyo Conference, Pakistan pledged more than $100 million over a five-year period towards Afghanistan's reconstruction. Our assistance is being provided in areas identified by the Afghan Government and channelled through it. In addition, we have extended additional transit trade facilities to Afghanistan. Bilateral trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan is now over $1 billion. We are also exploring with the Afghan Government the possibilities of private sector cooperation and investment opportunities, particularly in such areas as cement, pharmaceuticals and consumer goods. Pakistan strongly supports implementation of the gas pipeline project between Pakistan, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan. We also welcome all other initiatives aimed at economically integrating Afghanistan with its neighbours and with regional economic structures.

Finally, I wish to reaffirm Pakistan's full and unequivocal support for the Bonn process and for President Hamid Karzai's Government. Pakistan supports Mr. Karzai's efforts aimed at national reconciliation and reconstruction of his country. There can be no doubt that a strong, stable and prosperous Afghanistan is in Pakistan's vital national interest. We will therefore spare no effort to help achieve this. Pakistan is resolved to work actively with the international community to promote peace, stability, reconstruction and economic development in Afghanistan.

Mr. Løvald (Norway): Yesterday, Mr. Hamid Karzai was inaugurated as the first-ever elected President of Afghanistan — a milestone in the country's history. President Karzai has been given a strong mandate to confront the difficult challenges facing the country. Long-term commitment by the international community is of vital importance. Norway welcomes the partnership between Afghanistan and the international community that was reconfirmed at the Berlin Conference earlier this year.

Without security there will be no development, and without development there will be no security. The fragile security situation underscores the need for a national army and police force and a functioning justice system. We urge the Afghan Government to accelerate the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. While Afghan ownership is essential, the international community must provide substantial support for security sector reforms. Norway will continue to assist in the training of Afghan police under the German-led police project.

Until Afghan security institutions are sufficiently strengthened, international security forces are needed. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) has a crucial role to play in securing stability in the country. Extending security to the provinces is essential. In that regard the provincial reconstruction teams have an important role to play by providing security and extending the authority of the central Government.

Afghanistan is NATO's main priority, and Norway's priorities are well in line with NATO's policy. We remain committed to maintaining a military presence in Afghanistan through our contribution to the ISAF in Kabul and our participation in one of the provincial reconstruction teams in northern Afghanistan.

The expanding drug economy is a major challenge, and combating it must be a top priority for us all. It is corrupting Government officials and undermining lawful economic activities. If the drug profiteers are allowed to continue their thriving business, the consequences will be devastating and will reach far beyond the borders of Afghanistan. They will also be felt in our own societies through increased drug abuse.

Norway supports the Afghan National Drug Control Strategy and urges the Afghan Government to commit itself fully to its implementation. Coordinated international efforts under the leadership of the United Kingdom are also appreciated. Norway is increasing its support for counter-narcotic activities.

In the last year we have witnessed an increasing number of attacks on United Nations and civilian aid workers, most of them Afghans. That is unacceptable. A concerted effort is needed to reverse a trend that runs counter to the most basic tenets of international humanitarian law.

The United Nations and non-governmental organizations have raised concerns about the mixing of military and civilian roles. That complex issue underscores the need to strengthen civil-military coordination in order to ensure complementarity of action and to ensure that the different mandates of civilian and military actors are respected.

The Afghan authorities and the United Nations, together with national and international security forces, played important roles in the presidential election, which was an important step in the direction of a pluralist and stable democracy. A competent new

Government that is representative of the country's ethnic diversity will be vital for promoting national reconciliation ahead of the parliamentary and local elections.

Peace in Afghanistan cannot be achieved without the cooperation of its neighbouring countries. All the signatories of the Kabul Declaration on Good-neighbourly Relations must ensure that they fully implement the Declaration.

Norway welcomes the progress made in the human rights field and the crucial work of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission. However, more remains to be done. Women must be allowed to participate in all aspects of the reconstruction and peacebuilding processes. Norway is ready to work as a partner with Afghanistan in the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the new constitution. The constitution must be reflected in legislation and judicial practice, with due regard to a role for Islam that is acceptable to all Afghans.

The return of approximately 3 million refugees and internally displaced persons is a major achievement, but it is also a burden on local communities. Thus, reconstruction and socio-economic development are key challenges. Visible results and a central Government presence in the provinces are crucial. We welcome the efforts to develop a poverty reduction strategy paper as an integrated part of the national development plans.

Afghanistan is one of the major recipients of Norwegian assistance, and as from 2004 it is one of our designated partner countries in development cooperation. Norway is a strong supporter of joint financing mechanisms such as the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund for strengthening Afghan ownership and improving donor coordination. Afghan leadership can be supported only by strengthening the Government, not by sidelining it. We are therefore channelling a substantial part of our assistance to the Trust Fund and urge other donors to follow suit.

Afghan commitment to the Bonn agreement and the Berlin declaration is a prerequisite for continued international assistance. The massive turnout at the presidential election is a clear sign of the Afghan people's determination to take charge of the affairs of their own country. We must not let them down.

Mr. Sen (India): My delegation welcomes this opportunity to participate in the annual discussions in the General Assembly on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security, and on international assistance for the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

The presidential election in Afghanistan, one of the last, yet the most critical, milestones of the Bonn process, was a landmark event in Afghanistan's history. Over eight million Afghan citizens, 40 per cent of whom were women, exercised their franchise. In doing so, the Afghan people defied the threat of terrorism and firmly committed themselves to the practice of democracy. They also rejected the repeated attempts of retrogressive elements to restore the ideology of obscurantism, hatred and violence.

India commends the Afghan people for the successful process through which President Karzai was elected with a significant majority. We congratulate President Karzai on his inauguration yesterday as the first democratically elected President of Afghanistan.

The next tasks in the political process are the formation of a new Government and the holding of parliamentary, provincial and local elections. We look forward to the emergence of a strong central Government that will consolidate its authority and ensure further progress towards security, stability and success of the reconstruction process. We have no doubt that the new Government will be representative of the ethnic, cultural and geographical diversity of the country. Efforts at national reconciliation and unity are essential if Afghanistan is to succeed in its nation-building endeavour. We look forward to practical consideration of parliamentary, provincial and local elections, and their conduct free from manipulation or fraud.

The report of the Secretary-General on this item (A/59/581), issued pursuant to Assembly resolutions 58/27 A and B, provides a useful overview of the key political and humanitarian developments in Afghanistan from December 2003 to November 2004. One may praise the clear analysis of social, economic and reconstruction issues. However, we believe a firmer message from the United Nations would have been appropriate and necessary for the international community to ensure stability in Afghanistan. In its paragraph 12, the report highlights the fact that "security in the south and south-east deteriorated to the point where large areas were effectively out of bounds to the assistance community, and government officials were frequent targets of attacks". The reality of the current security situation in Afghanistan is even more serious.

The process of peace and stabilization in Afghanistan is still fragile. While no serious violent incidents took place on the day of the election, the upsurge in militant violence in the run-up to the election and in the period since has revealed that terrorism perpetrated by Taliban, Al Qaeda and Hizb-e-Islami elements continues to constitute the primary source of insecurity in Afghanistan. Their activities, with support from outside, have undermined reconstruction efforts, especially in the southern and south-eastern provinces. Increasing attacks by terrorist elements continue to represent not only the greatest threat to Afghanistan's security and stability, but also a major threat to regional and international peace and security.

The fact that the report makes almost no mention of terrorism and the threat it poses to Afghanistan and its security conveys the impression that this is no longer an issue of concern for Afghanistan, the United Nations or the international community. Moreover, by that lack, the United Nations is seen to be abdicating its primary responsibility of playing a central and impartial role in promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan, as the General Assembly resolution enjoins it to do.

At the same time, the success of the disarmament programme, as represented by the extensive demobilization and heavy weapons cantonment, has signalled a new reality. Factional leaders appear to have internalized the lessons of democracy and have resigned themselves to attempt to rule through the ballot and not the bullet. Factional violence could never represent an existential threat to Afghanistan in the way terrorist and extremist activity did and continues to do. However, recent trends indicate that that poses even less of a threat than previously imagined.

Draft resolution A/59/L.44, now under consideration and concluded as a result of broad-based consultations among Member States, calls upon the Afghan Government, with the assistance of the international community, to "continue to address the threat to the security and stability of Afghanistan posed by Al-Qaida operatives, the Taliban and other extremist groups". It is evident that at this stage a continued international presence would be required. However, long-term stabilization of the country would require the empowerment of the Afghan central authorities and the building up of national security institutions that are led by Afghans and entrenched in Afghanistan's realities on the ground. Unfortunately, that process is not yet moving at the desired pace.

We also remain deeply concerned about the continued increase in the cultivation, production and trafficking of narcotic drugs in Afghanistan. According to the 2004 opium poppy survey of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, opium cultivation in Afghanistan increased by two thirds this year. This could undermine the political and economic reconstruction of Afghanistan and have potentially dangerous repercussions for the region and beyond. We agree with the Secretary-General on the need for additional efforts by countries through which Afghan opiates are trafficked and places where heroin abuse is a significant problem.

In view of our historical ties of friendship and cooperation with Afghanistan and the Afghan people, India has made a substantial contribution to Afghanistan's reconstruction effort. Despite our constraints and the fact that we are not a traditional donor, our present commitment over the period from 2002 to 2008 adds up to $400 million, including 1 million tons of wheat.

In partnership with the Afghan Government, India has undertaken projects in a number of sectors, including transportation, civil aviation, information technology, health, education, agriculture, information and broadcasting, telecommunications, power transmission, banking, urban development, water resources, industry and road construction. India has also undertaken an extensive programme for rebuilding institutional capacity through which more than 780 Afghans have received training in India in various fields. Our projects have reached out to people in virtually all parts of Afghanistan.

In the coming period we expect to focus more on projects in the infrastructure sector, including roads and power. India's economic assistance programme in Afghanistan is guided by Afghan priorities and ownership. Our relations with Afghanistan are bilateral and direct. The underlying principle of our cooperation with Afghanistan remains our sole desire to see Afghanistan emerge as a strong, united, independent and prosperous country. We wish to see full consolidation of authority by the central Government. Our efforts in reconstruction and other sectors will continue to be directed towards those ends.

For the benefit of interested delegations, we have placed copies of a brochure entitled "Afghans First: India at Work in Afghanistan", which details India's assistance programme in Afghanistan, at the side of the General Assembly Hall.

As part of our efforts to encourage trade, India signed a preferential trade agreement with Afghanistan in March 2003, which provides duty-free or reduced duty access for items of export interest to Afghanistan.

Afghanistan's transition from retrogressive fundamentalism to democracy and development has been impressive. Yet the international community cannot allow itself to forget that the challenges to Afghanistan's future and stability remain insidious and deep-rooted. It was not so long ago that the Taliban and Al Qaeda were defeated, but they were not vanquished. Those forces of terrorism and extremism continue to pose the greatest threat to Afghanistan's very existence. The international community would do well not only to recognize the nature of that threat but to confront it head-on.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my country's wholehearted support for President Karzai's leadership in the best interests of his country. India, like all other like-minded countries, stands for a strong, united, sovereign and independent Afghanistan.

Mr. Rock (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Canada wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security. On behalf of the Government of Canada, I wish to extend congratulations to President Karzai on his inauguration yesterday as President of Afghanistan. We wish him every success in his presidency.

The report of the Secretary-General (A/59/581) provides a useful picture of the progress made to date in Afghanistan and the challenges remaining.

I would like to begin by expressing the relief that we feel now that the United Nations workers taken hostage in Afghanistan have finally been released. Our thoughts go with them as they recover from this ordeal. We strongly condemn this hostage-taking as an abhorrent act of terrorism. Such cowardly acts threaten to undo the accomplishments that we have achieved to date. We trust that the perpetrators of this hostage-taking will be brought to justice. That will send a significant message to all who wish to support Afghanistan that such acts will not be tolerated.

Canada is concerned about continued threats and ongoing violence directed against humanitarian and development workers in Afghanistan. In 2004, some 59 non-governmental organization and election workers lost their lives. There must be no impunity for those who perpetrate these acts. The utmost must be done to ensure safe and unhindered access for such staff so that they can continue to do their important work.

As we recognize that Afghanistan is still in a fragile state, we are nonetheless heartened by the remarkable progress that it has made over the past year. The adoption of a constitution and the presidential election mark watersheds in Afghanistan's transition towards democracy. The fact that the elections took place almost without incident is testament to how far the country has come in such a short time. With the help of the international community, Afghanistan has set out on a path that will enable it to become a stable, democratic and self-sufficient State. We know that path will be long and sometimes riddled with obstacles. But Canada is resolved to stay the course and to support Afghanistan.

Canada agrees with the Secretary-General that much more needs to be achieved towards the fundamental goal of strengthening the capacity of the Government at all levels and extending its authority to all parts of the country. In its approach, Canada recognizes that there is a whole series of factors — including security-sector reform, the promotion of human rights, good governance and economic reconstruction — that are mutually reinforcing and therefore must be addressed simultaneously if we want to establish meaningful and sustainable change in Afghanistan.

(*spoke in English*)

Afghanistan is Canada's single largest recipient of bilateral aid: since 2001, Canada has set aside $616 million, of which the last $250 million will be spent in the period 2005-2009. Canada has respected the request of the Afghan Government to deliver assistance through the national priority programmes.

Canada also continues to make a significant contribution to NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). It was a Canadian, Lieutenant-General Rick Hillier, who commanded the Force with such skill and ability in the period February to August 2004. Our contributions to ISAF, as well as our continuing participation in coalition efforts as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, are helping to improve the security environment, allowing reconstruction to proceed and providing room for the Government to become truly established.

And Canada is planning to do more. As announced by Prime Minister Martin during his visit to the General Assembly just a few months ago, we will be undertaking a provincial reconstruction team in 2005 as part of the international effort to assist in establishing the conditions necessary to ensure continued progress.

Despite those efforts, we are very much aware that there are complex challenges that remain — for example, the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) and the efforts to counter the narcotics trade and the related threat posed by the uncooperative militia leaders. There is also the promotion and protection of human rights and the building of sound governance institutions across Afghanistan.

The drug trade in particular is troubling. It is not just a domestic Afghan issue; it is an international issue. The success of Afghans and of the international community in addressing that issue will be key to enhancing the prospects for long-term peace and stability. Efforts to curb drug production and trafficking have been hindered by the central Government's limited presence outside Kabul and by the lack of viable economic alternatives, particularly in rural development. With profits from the narcotics trade and control over customs revenues bolstering their power, some militia leaders will not likely be compelled to comply with DDR and other Government directives.

While security remains a real and immediate concern, we cannot overlook other issues of equal importance, such as the promotion and protection of human rights, including women's human rights and gender equality, the building of a sound legal framework with access to justice for all Afghans, the creation of accountable governance institutions and the development of viable livelihoods, without which all of Afghanistan's gains will be unsustainable and the international community's investment will be lost.

We are aware that we need to continue to work with the Afghan Government at all levels to assist in enhancing its capacity to govern effectively, transparently and democratically. The legitimacy and credibility of the emerging Afghan governance institutions are crucial. In an effort to assist the Afghan central Government in building its legitimacy, the international community should be supportive of that Government in establishing a range of mechanisms to marginalize illicit behaviour and to address past injustices by ending impunity. We therefore welcome President Karzai's commitment to selecting a Cabinet that reflects those principles, and we advocate an intensive effort to create a sound legal architecture and an appropriately timed and sequenced approach to transitional justice.

As in my country, independent scrutiny of Government actions is important in Afghanistan. Canada supports the work being conducted by Ms. Sema Samar and the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission. We want to emphasize that the independence of the Commission continues to be essential to its success in ensuring respect for human rights in Afghanistan and in addressing past human rights abuses. We urge the Government of Afghanistan to formalize that institution.

An immediate priority is ensuring that the groundwork is laid for parliamentary, provincial and district elections. Canada urges the Government of Afghanistan to make the necessary decisions on technical and policy issues to allow for planning to begin in earnest. Canada will continue to support the establishment of a secure environment and democratic development in Afghanistan as key factors in achieving lasting change.

Let me close by observing that Afghanistan has had a truly remarkable year and has overcome extraordinary challenges. But, of course, the work is not yet complete. In the coming year, it will be crucial to address the interconnected issues to which I have referred, involving DDR, the narcotics trade, militia leaders and good governance. Afghanistan and all our colleagues here and around the world can count on Canada's enthusiastic involvement in that process as we work in common cause towards those shared objectives.

Mr. Vohidov (Uzbekistan) (*spoke in Russian*): I should like at the outset to express gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his most recent report on the situation in Afghanistan (A/59/581). In our view, it covers a period that was decisive for the country — a period when the Afghan people, with the assistance of the international community, once again reaffirmed its choice as it embarked on the path of building its future. From our perspective, the report's analysis of the situation in the country is of the utmost importance for the implementation of further measures aimed at building a stable and democratic society in Afghanistan.

The delegation of Uzbekistan associates itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan on behalf of the countries members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and we support the positions set out in that statement.

As this year comes to a close, the world has witnessed an important event: the international community's coordinated efforts and resolve have made it possible to achieve, for the first time, an effective result in stabilizing the situation in Afghanistan. An important step has been taken towards the strengthening of its statehood; I am thinking, first and foremost, of the adoption of the new Constitution and the holding of the presidential elections.

On 9 October 2004, an event took place that was of major importance not only for Afghanistan, but for all of progressive mankind: a President of Afghanistan was democratically elected for the first time. We welcome the election of President Karzai, whose inauguration took place yesterday, and we express our full support for him. We note with satisfaction that the delegation of Uzbekistan, headed by our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sodiq Safoev, had the honour to participate in that wonderful ceremony.

Uzbekistan welcomes the progress achieved in implementing the decisions of the Bonn and Berlin conferences with regard to the building of an effective State administration and the formation of such elements as the army, law-enforcement agencies and the judicial system, in addition to the further social and economic development of the country and the continued implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme.

Unfortunately, however, hostage-taking and attacks by terrorist groups have shown that peace in Afghanistan, which is such an important prerequisite for the rebuilding of the country, is still fragile. Uzbekistan has on numerous occasions stated its vision for the establishment of the conditions necessary for peace and stability in Afghanistan. In a nutshell, they are the following.

First, the demilitarization of military and political factions must be stepped up. Here, we welcome further steps to enhance the authority and resources of the central Government of Afghanistan, in particular, strengthening its administrative functions in the provinces. The process of the collection of stockpiles of weapons must be accelerated and the potential for the reintegration of demobilized soldiers and officers into the economy must be expanded. Well-controlled and well-equipped agencies must be established for the military forces, the security system and, most important, a united national armed forces.

Secondly, the formation of State agencies would enable, in the light of ethnic and regional interests, the impact of the central Government to be felt throughout the country.

Thirdly, international cooperation must be built up in order to eliminate terrorism, extremism and the illegal drug trade.

Fourthly, we must ensure consistency with the implementation of the decisions of the Tokyo meeting and the International Conference on Afghanistan, inter alia concerning the fulfilment of pledges to provide financial assistance to Afghanistan.

Finally, States must renounce policies of interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

The figures cited in the recent United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime review regarding the ominous growth in poppy cultivation and the processing of opium in Afghanistan cannot fail to be a source of profound concern. It has become obvious that, without speeding up the implementation of major structural changes in the Afghan economy, drugs, linked with terrorism, will become the major threat to the national security of the country and the effective functioning of its Government. We call for an expansion of assistance to Afghanistan to enhance its ability to counter that threat. Given the fact that Central Asia is in the forefront of the fight against drug trafficking, we are also counting on support from the international community to support the initiative to establish a regional information and coordination centre in Central Asia to combat the transport of illegal drugs and the crime linked to the illegal drug trade.

I would like to draw attention to the importance of using existing resources, including the infrastructure and experience of neighbouring countries, for the economic recovery of Afghanistan. In that context, I would like once again to emphasize that Uzbekistan considers Afghanistan to be an integral entity of the Central Asian territorial space and is in favour of its participation in regional integration processes. Uzbekistan is providing assistance to the Afghan people in, inter alia, rebuilding and constructing communications, electric power lines, electric power stations and irrigation facilities. To create the most favourable possible conditions for the transportation of goods into Afghanistan, the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan, together with the appropriate United Nations agencies, has established a mechanism for the coordination of flows of goods, which includes international organizations and donor countries. As of today, more than 2.5 million tons of goods have been sent to Afghanistan via the Termez-Hairaton route. In this context, Uzbekistan welcomes draft resolution A/59/L.44, introduced today by the delegation of Germany, and is among its sponsors.

Mr. İlkin (Turkey): Turkey has already aligned itself with the statement made by the representative of the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union. In the light of Turkey's deep-rooted historical and friendly ties with Afghanistan, I am taking the floor to further highlight a number of points with regard to my country's views concerning the recent developments in Afghanistan.

Let me first say that Turkey is a sponsor of draft resolution A/59/L.44 which we feel objectively reflects both the successes achieved and certain challenges encountered in the implementation of the Bonn Agreement. We expect that the text as a whole will relay a strong message of solidarity with the Afghan people and, at the same time, reaffirm the determination and commitment of the international community to remain seized of the developments in that country.

The adoption of a Constitution on 4 January 2004 and the direct presidential elections held on 9 October 2004 constitute important milestones in the Bonn process and reaffirm the commitment of the Afghan people to achieve reconciliation, peace and stability in the country. In that context, we hope and expect that the new political structure will indeed reflect the multi-ethnic nature of the country and will be capable of reaching out to all communities.

On the other hand, we believe that the approach to security issues in Afghanistan should be guided by the fundamental principle of the indivisibility of security, and that such issues should thus be handled in a comprehensive manner. We hope that the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme will continue to gain momentum. In that respect, the decision taken by General Dostum to initiate the disarmament and demobilization of the 53rd division is a concrete step in the right direction. It should encourage other leaders to follow that path, contributing to the reinforcement of peace and stability. It is equally important that security vacuums not be created following the completion of DDR programmes.

As of February 2005, we will be assuming, for the second time, the leadership of the International Security Assistance Force, with the participation of a large Turkish military contingent, in order to consolidate peace, tranquillity and law and order in Afghanistan. Indeed, as a country always willing to contribute to the cause of peace, security and stability throughout the world, Turkey is prepared to assist and support Afghanistan in every way.

In addition to actively collaborating with the international community for the reconstruction of Afghanistan, Turkey is carrying out its own reconstruction projects in the country. In the field of health, for instance, the rehabilitation of Shiberghan and Andkhoy hospitals were completed last summer, and those hospitals are now fully equipped to serve their patients. In the same manner, the Meymaneh hospital will soon become operational.

Combating drug production and illicit trafficking constitutes one of the top priorities of Afghanistan. To achieve this goal, the implementation of a comprehensive and long-term strategy, coupled with the creation of alternative means of living, which will offer new opportunities to the Afghan people, is imperative. The eradication of poppy fields should be seen in that larger context.

Last but not least, allow me to commend the untiring and dedicated work of both the Afghan leadership and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan in responding to the great challenges ahead. Let me also reiterate the strong commitment of the Turkish Government to the security, unity, reconstruction and welfare of Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/32 of 19 November 2002, I call on the observer of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Ms. Filip (Inter-Parliamentary Union): It gives me pleasure to address the General Assembly today during this debate on a matter which is very closely linked to the mandate of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). I will focus my remarks on the need for urgent international assistance in building representative institutions in Afghanistan.

We believe that strong, representative institutions, especially parliaments, functioning in an accountable and transparent manner, are the cornerstone of democracy and good governance. Afghanistan, which is the focus of our discussion today, is one of the countries where the IPU pursues this vision.

After 25 years of war and political instability, Afghanistan has just chosen a President, following a hotly contested and largely democratic presidential election. The next step in setting up democratic institutions will be the establishment, by the fall of 2005, of a modern parliament. Under the new Constitution, adopted in January 2004, a bicameral National Assembly will be created, with an upper house, the Meshrano Jirga, and a lower house, the Wolesi Jirga. Because of the country's lack of recent parliamentary experience, the Afghan authorities face a daunting challenge in establishing and sustaining a viable legislature. The IPU is committed to making every effort to support them in achieving this objective.

In cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Office in Afghanistan, the Inter-Parliamentary Union carried out a monthlong needs assessment mission to Kabul last October and November. The mission assisted the Afghan authorities in identifying the needs of the future National Assembly. It identified major areas where action needs to be taken as a matter of urgency if the future parliament is to convene on the appointed date and if it is to be an effective legislature that is representative and which meets the expectations of the people of Afghanistan.

First of all, it is important that an institutional legal framework be in place. In other words, legislative texts, including the provisional rules of procedure of both houses, will have to be prepared.

Secondly, if the new parliament is to be able to carry out the tasks assigned to it by the Constitution, action should be taken as soon as possible to train the future parliamentary staff, so that they have at least a basic knowledge of their new work. Such professional development must also be extended to the members of the Assembly once they are elected.

Thirdly, there is obviously a need to direct efforts towards improving the infrastructure earmarked for the National Assembly, so that it can be adapted to the cultural and religious specificities of the country, as well as to the special needs of people with disabilities, as enshrined in the Constitution itself. There is no gainsaying the fact that information and communication technologies in the newly established institution will be crucial for this nascent body to function well and coherently, both internally and in terms of its relations and interaction with the broader Afghan society.

In addition to those areas of focus, the IPU stresses that special efforts must be made to address such fundamental issues as the institution's bilingualism, as it will operate in Dari and Pashto; the full participation of women in parliament after nearly 10 years of Taliban rule — and I would mention here that the IPU has welcomed the fact that the Constitution provides equal rights to men and women and guarantees that women will make up at least 25 per cent of representatives in the lower house of parliament; and thirdly, relations between the Assembly and the public, including the most vulnerable groups.

Once again, the new National Assembly must be accessible, transparent and representative of all Afghan citizens, whatever their ethnic origin or gender. It must act as the interface between the State and the people by pursuing an agenda that promotes public outreach.

The new parliament will be inaugurated at a time when Afghanistan is in need of a strong legislative body. That institution should have the capacity to devise and adopt in a speedy fashion a whole range of legislation that will govern a new Afghanistan after so many years of conflict and instability. As a forum for the confrontation of ideas and for the forging of consensus around key national issues and policies, it will have a major role to play to ensure that past tensions do not come to the fore again, giving rise to unnecessary strife and suffering for the people of Afghanistan. It is in this way that it can contribute to the establishment of conditions conducive to lasting development and peace.

The IPU stands committed to working with its Afghan and international partners in furthering those objectives. The programme of action proposed by the IPU/UNDP mission provides a framework for such cooperation, thereby ensuring greater coherence in the actions undertaken by the international community to foster democratic institutions in Afghanistan in the coming months.

The President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker in the debate on agenda item 27 and sub-item (d) of agenda item 39 for this meeting.

We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/59/L.44, as orally corrected.

Draft resolution A/59/L.44 has two parts: part A is entitled "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security", and part B is entitled "Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan".

Before we vote on the draft resolution, I should like to inform the Assembly that, since the introduction of A/59/L.44, the following countries have become sponsors: India, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/59/L.44 as orally corrected?

Draft resolution A/59/L.44, as orally corrected, was adopted (resolution 59/112 A and B).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of agenda item 27 and sub-item (d) of agenda item 39.

Programme of work

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform members that the second informal meeting of the plenary on the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change will take place at 10 a.m. tomorrow, 9 December.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.